

Today we're continuing in the series *In God's Presence*, and this is *Part 3*.

We're going to pick up from where we left off last week. In doing so we'll back up just a few verses, and this is in order to get the context again in mind of what we're covering. Now, we had started by going through the story of how Moses had sent out spies into the promised land and they had returned with their report, and we're going to pick this up again here in Numbers 14:1-2, and then we'll continue on after that. I guess we have several verses I'm picking up.

**Numbers 14:1-2—So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.** This is after the report had been given and the ten spies had given this bad report, and here they were, it's like, "We've come all this way..." Well, it goes on with the story here. They chose to believe the bad report.

My wife reminded me of a story that goes along with this as far as what happened in Toledo at one point. We had a situation up there where we had a board meeting one night, snowing, cold, got into the board meeting for that particular area. Well, for the whole region there, but anyway, at that point in time. Certain ones had kind of been powwowing together and deciding they didn't like the direction things were going. We had ten with a bad report. Interesting. Basically, two that didn't. They claimed they had ten that agreed with them on this. Anyway, think things that happen over and over and over through history and through time that we're to learn from.

Anyway, that was the night that someone came up and gave me a kiss on the cheek. You think, "This is really, really, really weird." Because they were betraying everything that had been established. Anyway, did some of the same things they did here because it's like, "We're going to pick out someone to lead us." That's what Israel did. "Let's pick someone else out besides this Moses." (We'll get there eventually.) But you think, it's crazy how the human mind works sometimes and what people think. Especially when you're begotten of God's holy spirit. Israelites, you can understand more because they didn't have God's spirit.

**So all the congregation lifted their voices and they cried, and the people wept that night. Then all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, If only we had died in the land of Egypt!** This is in the context of just getting old and died there naturally and our family is going through the normal process of the death as it takes place.

**Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the Eternal brought us to this land to fall by the sword?** So, their mind was believing that report, and "they have giants, they have people of great stature" that they're going to have to go fight "and there's going to be massive

loss of life.” This is in their minds, and they know that families are going to be without children and on and on it goes. That’s their thinking.

**Why has the Eternal brought us out here to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?** I mean, on a physical plane this is nuts. What are you going to return to? And I’m sure they’re going to welcome you with open arms. Pharaoh, his army, got destroyed, and I’m sure the rest of the people are going to love to have you back. They’re probably, after they got past some of this, it’s good there was a separation. And do you think they’re not going to have some kind of a battle, some kind of a war? But anyway.

**So they said to one another, Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.** So here we go again, “Let us select someone, return back to Egypt.” **Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.** Now, with God’s spirit as God was working through Moses and through Aaron especially, it’s a unique thing that took place here in that respect, because they’re able to see things on a scale and in a way that the Israelites couldn’t as a whole. Moses most assuredly grasped and comprehended what they were doing, what this meant. Their mind, their heart, their desire was this is something we have to repent of and this is something that prayerfully Israel is going to repent of.

So, it goes on to say, **But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes.** So, they got it as well. They grasped the seriousness of what was taking place. “This is what God promised; let’s go take it!” That was their message. ...and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, **The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.**

So again, another plea, in that respect, and this is what they see, this is what they believe and so they’re trying to reason with. It goes on to say, **If the Eternal delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us.** It’s just a fact. That’s an awesome thing.

You know, if your mind is geared toward God, especially with God’s spirit and you’re focused upon those things, you’re going to be able to see things in that light, “Our lives are in God’s hands.” We go forward. We do what God has given us to do. What else is there? What is there to fear?

**Only do not rebel against the Eternal, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread.** Awesome! **Their protection has departed from them, and the Eternal is with us.** Awesome, again! Positive. It’s just a matter of something you know. **Do not fear them.** In the Church, through time here people have feared various things, whatever they might be - the job, the boss, family. Incredible.

**And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the glory of the Eternal appeared in the tabernacle of the meeting before the children of Israel.** So again, God revealed His presence before them. Not a spiritual one that we’re able to experience and we

understand on the spiritual plane, but one that He had to work with them in a physical sense by physical things they could see and grasp, that this is not normal, and power that they can't comprehend when these things took place, the parting of the Red Sea, the Passover that prepared them for leaving Egypt and on and on it goes.

These are things that should have helped them to grasp God is Almighty, God is powerful, there is nothing withheld from God that He can't do to lead and guide and direct us. On a physical plane that should have been there, but it wasn't.

So again, we're going through this series because we can, if we're not careful, take lightly or begin to lose sight of how awesome it is that we have the awesome blessing of being in the presence of God all the time. We can go before His throne at any time. The more we grasp that the more thankful, the more in awe, and the more we'll actually love God. Truly, the more you see that, the more you grasp that it strengthens that bond, that relationship.

This is where we're ended and we're continuing on now in **verse 11—Then the Eternal said to Moses, How long will these people reject Me?** Now, we can read this concerning physical Israel, but what about the Church? Over and over and over again this has continued through the Church of God; from the very beginning and on the vast majority have always left. It's the way it's been.

**How long will they not believe Me?** So, on a physical plane by physical things they could see they should have been able to physically grasp there is something incredible here taking place. They never saw anything like that in Egypt with the gods of Egypt and so forth and things that they might have messed with in times past (which is something that people are prone to do). So again, nothing even close! So, even on a physical plane.

But us and people who have been in God's Church who have been impregnated with God's spirit - no excuses whatsoever. It's choices, choices, choices. Faithful to God or something else.

**How long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with disease and disinherit them, and I will make you (speaking to Moses), I will make you a nation greater and mightier than they.**

Now, God throws things at us at different times and different ways to see where we are, to see what our response is going to be, to teach us, to force us into a situation where we have to give an answer and we have to think about all sides of the issue quickly. We don't have time. Like the Apostasy, people had to make quick decisions. What is it based on? On and on it goes.

We're tried in those things, and until that situation comes along we don't always know. People didn't know what they might do in certain scenarios. You could ask someone, "What are you going to do if..." and it was like, "You know, if something like that were to happen, well of course we continue on." But actually, when it happens then some people don't know their own minds, don't know what's inside of them. But God refines and God knows as a whole where we are and where we stand and what's going to take place.

So, it wasn't God's purpose to make a great nation out of Moses. It was with the tribes. A plan that was established long before and God was going to work it out. But it was still said to Moses to help him to grow, to help him to mature. God knows what direction we're going to go in those kinds of things after He's tried us and brought us along a certain time, and certainly, He had worked with Moses long enough to know exactly what Moses was going to do. Awesome. It's a part of this thing of God knowing, "I know you. I know what you're going to do. You've already proven it," and by what He did in Egypt alone with Pharaoh, God already knew what he would do.

**So Moses said to the Eternal, Then the Egyptians will hear it.** He could see it. He knew it. He's not telling God anything new. We can read through things like this and think, well, yeah, and so he changed God's mind. No, it's not how it worked.

**Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, Eternal, are among these people; that You, Eternal, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Now, if You cause these people to die all at once, then the nations that have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, Because the Eternal was not able to bring this people out of the land... That's true. That's the way human beings are, "He wasn't able to do it. Brought them this far, hands full, just wiped them out. Couldn't do it. Couldn't get them to the promised land."** This was good for Moses in a very powerful way.

**Because the Eternal was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness. So now I pray, let the power of my LORD be great, just as You have spoken, saying...** I mean, this is really awesome, it really is. Think of the spirit, the mind, the attitude of Moses and how he was able to put everything together exactly the way it should be. It's about coming into unity of mind with God Almighty, being convicted of the things that God guides and directs and leads us in. That's what it's all about for all of us, to come into unity of spirit with the mind and the being of God, with His purpose and His plan. Sometimes we go through things to help us become more deeply convicted of that. That's the growing process.

This is what he says to God, brings back that which he knows is the way God is. **The Eternal is longsuffering** (patient, enduring). How deeply do we believe that? If we believe those things deeply, and the more deeply we believe them, the more we're going to grasp as far as the Church, as far as what God is doing in our lives and that relationship He desires with us, the more we'll see how God works with us all, every one of us.

**The Eternal is longsuffering, and abundant in mercy.** It says "forgiving" but that's not the word that's here. It's about **bearing a way or carrying iniquity and transgression.** God has a purpose and a means and a way of dealing with these things, of handling these things. We know that especially through the Passover, and on and on it goes. We know the spiritual process. But

even for them they had a process whereby they could remain a nation together without being ostracized.

So, it says, **but He by no means clear them, visiting the iniquity of the fathers.** In other words, everyone is responsible for their own choices and decisions. He's putting it all in a perspective of what it is. It's up to each one of us and the choices we make. "You're longsuffering, You're patient, You're filled with mercy." I think of David talking to God in that regard, knowing He was merciful. That's why he responded in the manner he did, "I know You're merciful." Incredible. "I place my life before Your mercy seat, before Your judgment."

...**but He**, speaking of God, **by no means clear them, visiting the iniquity of the fathers of the children.** Especially for them, they weren't clear, they didn't have a means of being able to be fully forgiven of sin, obviously. We are able to grasp that as far as a Church is concerned.

It says here, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children of the third and fourth**, as it says here, **generation.** But again, some people misunderstand what this is about. They feel that it's a matter then that God is going to judge those other descendants in a harsh way and they're going to, in this respect, as it says, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on to those generation." Yes.

How? Why? If God is merciful, longsuffering, and all of this, then why would He do that? A child who was innocent and they grow up and they're going to have certain punishment or things happen to them, certain curse or whatever it might be of life? No. It's because when you start to leave God, when you turn away from God that is automatic because the children will rise up, they will learn what you teach, they will see by your example or lack of it, and they won't have the blessings anymore of God being able to work in their life and so forth.

So this is what this is about. It's about a process. It's about people who leave God's Church, they don't become happier. Their lives don't get better. They don't become more joyful inside. It doesn't happen. Anybody who believes that is nuttier than a fruitcake and doesn't get it spiritually. Because when people leave they think they can grasp some kind of happiness out there. "If I go with this person I'm going to be happier." "My life is going to be better if I leave the Church because of another person, because we don't want 'this,' we don't want 'that,' and because it isn't right that I should have that relationship. But it's going to make me happier, more fulfilled." Boy, do you have a lot to learn. Boy, do you have a lot of suffering to go through. And if you have children and they grow up in that environment, so will they. The protection and the blessings from God, they won't be there in the same manner whatsoever. And so it was with the children of Israel. ...**visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth.**

**Pardon...** So, he's saying now, **forgive the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy.** In other words, "Because of Your mercy let them continue on, continue to work with them." That doesn't mean they're forgiven of their sin because that couldn't happen yet. We understand the difference. There is a difference in what they had to

go through. That's why God worked with them through a physical priesthood and offering up sacrifices and so forth. But none of those could take away sin. We don't want to confuse the thought of the two, but we are to learn from the example of the two what it means for the Church when we have God's spirit and what it meant for them.

**Then the Eternal answered, I have pardoned, according to your word.** Why? Because that was God's will. That was God's mind. It was for Moses, and it was for us to learn from. ...**but indeed, I live, and all the earth will be filled with the glory of the Eternal,** talking about His plan into the future that Moses didn't grasp and understand at that point in time. Israel didn't grasp and understand at that time. It wasn't told to them what was being planned, that there was going to be 7,000 years, 1,000-year millennium, 144,000 in the first resurrection. They didn't know any of that. They knew that there would be resurrections. They knew about God's, in the sense of what God had told them about that which was going to be greater in living on into time. But to grasp it all, to put it together in a plan, it wasn't given yet.

He's looking ahead and telling Moses, this is right, **For all people will see My glory.** Whether they agree with it or not they're going to witness the power of Almighty God, the glory of Almighty God, no matter who it is who has ever lived on earth, whether it be at the very end with billions who are destroyed in one fell swoop. Because that's going to happen at the very end when there will be no more human beings on earth. They'll either be in the God Family, or they'll be destroyed. Awesome. Incredible. Choices, choice, choices.

They're going to recognize the power of God through a resurrection. All those people that are given a second time to live, how did that happen? How is such a thing possible? How could that not move people to know God Almighty is all powerful and "I want this." Carnal human nature is nasty, evil, selfish, and so many are not going to want it. Incredible for us to grasp that and comprehend that.

**For all people will see My glory, and the signs which I do in Egypt and in the wilderness,** spiritual, in the wilderness and on and on it goes and what God works with through time. **Yet those who have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not listened to My voice...** Then God goes on with the story that we'll come back to in Part 4 or 5 because we're going to pause and go into some of this now because there are things to be learned from this as well that are good to reflect upon, to think about in all this about being in the presence of God.

For them physically, of what they had, of the power that was there to take them into a promised land that God said He would give to them, but now they're going to suffer more, they're going to learn that because of sin you suffer. It's the way it is. Because of our own stubbornness, we suffer, we bring it upon ourselves. Any time we sin, we suffer; we bring it upon ourselves.

God has determined how much that we must go through in some of those things to get through to this. That's why at the end here, written about it five times now. Each time it's become

stronger, each time, in one respect, it's become clearer, to see why God is going to do what He has to do. It's the only way.

That's an incredible thing, to comprehend that God knows the exact moment in time that is best for mankind, to intervene to stop annihilation, after a point where in one period of time (because there are many who are going to die before that into the millions), but at one point of time one-third are going to die of all mankind. That's what's going to happen.

And you think, why not just a fourth or ten percent? Why...? Because of the way we are and because of God's plan, because of God's mercy and things we don't grasp yet that are going to become clearer as we go along that we should be able to grasp part of already. But all those things come with time.

And so, let's stop here and consider this in Exodus 14:10, the first time they began to murmur, grumble, and complain, to find fault with Moses, to find fault with God because the Passover wasn't enough.

Sadly, for thousands and tens of thousands and tens of thousands and tens of thousands the Passover was not enough in God's Church. How much more can a human being be given than to know that you're able to be forgiven of all your sins when you come up out of a watery grave, you're to walk in newness of life, and God Almighty is to be your God and Joshua the Christ your Passover, and that from that point on any time you sin you can go before God and be cleansed of sin, forgiven of sin. The Israelites never had that, but we do. Awesome! But how many?

We can look at a physical Passover and say, "Man, all the firstborn of everything in Egypt died and that's how we were able to be brought to the Red Sea! And we're all together." But they couldn't get past certain physical things. "That's the Red Sea, there are mountains on both sides, and there's Pharaoh coming with his army. We're dead. Let's give up. Let's tell him we're sorry, we'll come back and be your slaves, whatever it takes." That's what they were ready to do.

Sometimes on a spiritual plane people who have had God's spirit have done far worse, far, far worse. So, it's easy for us to look at things like this - awesome - but all this having to do with what they're able to see in the presence of God. A cloud during the day, pillar of fire at night. How many times did they ever see that in their lifetime, or ever heard stories ever told about something like that ever happening? Have any gods ever done anything that's been manifested that human beings have been able to see? Not even close.

**Exodus 14:10.** At the Red Sea where Pharaoh's army was closing in on them—I'm not going to read the verse—but this is where Pharaoh's army was closing in. I already mentioned that and witnessing all that God had done by delivering them through the plagues of Egypt and so forth, and then the Passover, as I mentioned, here they began to murmur, complain against Moses.

And really, it's against God, but it's hard for a carnal human mind to grasp that by any measure.

And sadly, it's been extremely hard for people in God's Church to grasp that. Because I heard a lot of people in my time in Philadelphia murmur and complain against Herbert Armstrong. Leaders in God's Church murmur and complain, disagree. What is wrong that that could happen?

So, here they began complaining and murmuring against Moses for bringing them out of Egypt. They basically told Moses that, started complaining. "It'd been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to come out here be killed and slaughtered. Better to go back into slavery." So, this was their first one that's referred to in scripture, basically, the first time. God said there were ten times.

Then the second one is over in **Exodus 15:22**. So after passing through the Red Sea it was only three days. Only three days later! To me, that's mind-boggling. Here you go through, and water is on both sides of you, something that's impossible to happen, and you're going through and it's dry land, what you're walking on, and the carts that go through and everything else, and the animals that go through and all that they had with them, the livestock and so forth. They weren't bogged down in mud at any point.

I try to think about it. What would it be like to see walls of water like that? I mean to me that would be frightful. "We're going to...? There goes some and it's not coming in on them. Okay. They're behind. This is the better way to go. We might have a chance this way. Let's follow them." So, they go through the Red Sea. Incredible!

It's only three days later after witnessing something so profound for human beings. Never heard of stories like this. I mean, this is mind-boggling.

They finally came to where there was water in Marah, but it was bitter, as it says here in these verses. In other words, unfit to drink. Again, started complaining and murmuring, asking what they were expected to drink. That's what they were saying. "What are we supposed to drink? Where is the water? You're bringing us out here and we have nothing to drink?"

The point of all this is that by this time you should believe in the power of Almighty God, of things you have witnessed and seen. God showed Moses a tree. It says a tree, it's translated that. It obviously wasn't some giant thing because he was able to get it and take it and throw it in the water and it made the water clean. Well, anyway, this is what happened, but God made the water fit to drink. It was clean. It tasted fine then after that. It wasn't bitter. It was pleasant to drink is how it's recorded.

Right after that they moved on to an area of Elim, where it says there were seventy palm trees. They moved on right after this miracle had taken place, after God had intervened and did this through Moses. It says there were seventy palms and twelve wells of water. I love that, how God uses numbers, which shouldn't escape us. Seventy palm trees. Not seventy-one, not



seventy-two, not fifty-nine, seventy. Twelve wells of water. Awesome to see how God does things!

So, we come to **Exodus 16:1**, the third one here. Blessed all along the way to see these things, to witness these things, to have these things happen. Then on the fifteenth day of the second month - it's a month after Passover - they began murmuring again and complaining against Moses and Aaron as they said it was better for them, again, in Egypt when they had meat to eat and all the bread they wanted, rather than now to be hungry in the wilderness.

Our human nature really stinks. We are so blessed that we can begin a process of the mind becoming transformed and it's incredible.

So again, that was the third time.

The fourth time, **Exodus 6:15**, it starts there. God gave them manna. The Israelites didn't listen and obey Moses in this process when they were given the manna, concerning gathering and storing of the manna as they were supposed to. They just didn't follow directions. They didn't follow instruction. They tried to do it some other way.

This happens over and over and over again in God's Church. You think, well, no, it's pretty simple. It's pretty basic. We're asked to do a certain thing, perhaps it might be signing up for meals at the Feast; it's a pretty simple thing. When you register, that's one thing, but your money needs to be sent in because that verifies the fact that you're serious about that, that you're committed, you're going to do it, we can count on you being there. The Church is going to pay two to three times at least as much or more for that, but just for a commitment. Sometimes it's like pulling teeth, usually my teeth. Anyway. (That's why my hair is so short. There's not much up there anymore. I'm just kidding.)

This is a small thing. But again, we should see even in the small things of life because how we think in small things of our life is how we'll handle the big things of life. And if we don't grasp that simple principle? Because it's true. How we do the smaller things, whatever it might be, concerning principles and things that God gives to us and we do them well, we do them right, then God can give us a whole lot more. Because there's a process you go through in your thinking that helps you to do that, to appreciate that, to accomplish it. Very true thing.

God did give them the manna, and those who kept it in ways that they shouldn't have, the next morning there was a stench in the camp. I mean, it had to be pretty bad for there to be worms in it, one thing, that's one thing. That should be enough to turn them off to not try to eat it, because there were worms all over the stuff. Then the fact that it started stinking, another good clue you don't want to eat this.

"You didn't listen to the instruction that was given to you, so this is what's happening." The stench rose up in the camp, and it wasn't a pleasant thing. I think of all those frogs in Egypt. Can you imagine all of them being dead and piles and piles and piles? And if you've ever been around dead things, that is really bad. Any kind of dead animal. But when you have piles and

piles of something like that it's really bad. Not that I've been around a pile of frogs, but hey, dead animals and a human body, any kind of body, it doesn't smell good.

So, this horrible stench came up in the camp and God had to deal with them again. Moses had to deal with them again.

Then the next one here, the fifth one, is in **Exodus 16:22**, just a few verses down. Then after this, instruction was given during this short period of time. Right away they started disobeying. Right away it started stinking. Right away! Because they tried to collect more, because "If we get more today we don't have to go out tomorrow. Why do it the way Moses said? I mean, doesn't that sound pretty smart? I'm going to take some extra containers and I'm going to pick a whole lot more. Let's take the kids, let's take the whole family and let's go out there and pick as much as we can!" Not following Moses' instruction.

That's basically some of the kinds of things that took place. Then during this process then, after that incident, have another one pop up. Moses gives some more instruction. Then instruction was given about how to collect twice as much on the sixth day. So more instruction goes out. "Now, on the sixth day here, we're coming up to the sixth day, this is how you're to do it. Hope you've learned that you follow instruction."

Now, it wasn't said that way but that's the hope, that "Maybe you realize by this point it's good to follow instruction." They were to rest then on the seventh day as it was a holy Sabbath to God. This is where they were told this. "This is coming up a holy Sabbath to God and you need to do this the way God says to do it. This is the instruction you need to follow."

So again, here's the time where you could pick more, Friday, the sixth day. Go out and get some extra and it will last. Now, just seeing that should have been awesome enough. You think, "Man, these other days it doesn't last, but on this day God says it's going to last." Then they wake up the next morning and it doesn't stink and there are no worms in it. It's like, this ought to teach you something - the power of Almighty God.

It should have shown them, "God is in our presence! He's here. He works with us. We have the cloud during the daytime and the pillar of fire at night and we have all this, and He brings us to water, He gives us water, and the Egyptians aren't in the picture anymore and we're going to the promised land." It should have been exciting. Well, it was to only a handful in essence.

On the seventh day there were those who went out to gather again more than what they were supposed to, and even went out on that particular day. They were chided for not obeying the commandments of God again.

Now, we've gone through five accounts so far. We can look upon the Israelites and think about them and think about, man, it's hard to grasp a carnal mind so carnal. It's easy to find fault with them after everything they saw because it should have done something to the mind to see those things.

That's why it takes so much thundering, which people aren't even paying any attention to, but it'll get a whole lot worse, a whole lot more of the Trumpets then. The Trumpets as they come along, that it takes more and more and more because people can't learn, they can't humble themselves. They try to resist and fight. They try to hold on to something that they believe they can hold onto some way, some how. God's going to take it all away.

Isaiah, chapter after chapter after chapter goes through and talks about how God is going to remove the haughtiness and the pride of this nation and the rest - first and foremost Israel. Even still the scattered peoples, the nations He gave toward this end-time. So Ephraim and Manasseh, top of the list, top of the list for being addressed in some of these things. That's where God begins to humble, in these nations, all the peoples that are here in these nations. Incredible. It takes one after another. It takes five. It takes five to totally take care of, to end this nation. Mind-boggling. I mean, we can't even begin to grasp what's coming.

People still resist. People will still resist. They won't listen to things they've heard. I think of the scattered Church. There are some, well, maybe the vast majority of them by this time because the pride is so strong, won't be able to repent. Because they don't like the way God's doing it, let alone how God is doing it, through whom God is doing it, and on and on it goes, the story. Just won't humble themselves. "Can't be that. It can't be that." And so, they fight and resist.

So, hopefully we can see those things. You know what? God wants us to see those things. He wants us to understand that, of how hard-hearted the human heart, the mind truly is. It's just that way. Only God can begin to soften it and change it through His way, Trumpet after Trumpet after Trumpet. Then, Joshua and 144,000 return, and that can well exceed all that has been destroyed to that point in time depending on human beings, depending on their response. But people are still going to resist and fight. They don't want to change.

The human mind is exceedingly selfish, and it's because of that selfishness that with that is pride, that they will continue to hold on to something different and resist God after all that, one thing after another after another after another.

So again, it's easy for us to find fault and see things wrong with the Israelites, but human nature is the same today. The world is still the same today. Human beings in the world are still the same today no matter what they call themselves, whatever religion they call themselves. Even we in God's Church, we still have that nature. And hopefully and prayerfully we see it well and recognize the need to fight it day-by-day-by-day-by-day. And to love God, to love what He's shown us, to grasp where we are, to grasp what's coming, awesome.

We can see physical things like that sometimes concerning Israelites, but it's difficult something for us to see ourselves. So, I thought about some of the things of our past and thought I'd just mention a few.

First one that came to mind, one of the first things I think of is soon after I'd come into the Church, and it came into Herbert Armstrong's mind to build a structure to be dedicated to the Great God. Now, this is when I began to experience murmuring and complaining against God's apostle in a profound way even by those who were supposed to be ordained, those who were supposed to be serving God, those who had jobs and so forth where that was given to them, let alone others within the congregations.

People began to find fault with that because there was a request, the need for funds. If you wanted to be a part of this, be able to give more to that, more above and beyond tithes and offerings. Now, at that time we were still going through a process where every third year there was another tithe. It hadn't been determined yet that different governments and so forth were beginning to fulfill that responsibility because it was more of a government matter, an administrative matter, than it was a Church matter, when Herbert Armstrong began to address some of those things.

At this time there were people, at that point in time and through some of those years, had thoughts of why it was being constructed and thought of and so forth, because other plans were out there. Because something at the top and the forefront of Herbert Armstrong's mind, which I believe with all my being that brethren grasped and comprehended was there's a gospel going out to all the world and we support that wholeheartedly with all of our being, so thankful. Because it's not our money, it's God's, and we knew where it was going, and it was going to TV, to radio, to booklets and all the things that were out there in such a massive way. It was exciting seeing how that was growing.

Then this came along on top of all of that. So, there were people wanting him to cut out TV stations and cut out radio stations and stop printing as many *Plain Truths* and so forth in order to pay for this. Well, you didn't have to give anything. There are a lot of people who became disgruntled at that point in time.

I think of one deacon at that particular time who made a comment, and he said, "I really think that because this is a struggle and we're having this financial crunch right now in the church that God is trying to show Herbert Armstrong that he shouldn't build that thing." Okay, that's your opinion. Think, in my mind, it's like I know that of all people on earth he is the closest to Almighty God there is, and if God wants to tell him something he'll get it and it won't be through something like this, something that should be so clear and so easy to come to a conclusion of. But again, choices, choices, choices, choices.

So, this was the first big thing of murmuring and grumbling within the Church that I had witnessed in that particular period of time. Not that there weren't some others, but this was a biggie, it really was, because this was carried out over a few years and there were those who began to teach against it and those who began to complain and murmur against it, and those who began to quit paying tithes because of it. It gave them excuse not to have to do that. That's human reasoning.

And so again, this structure to be built. Now, I knew a lot of other people who were excited about it. Some who went and got loans to do it, to pay it, to help give more. "This is an exciting project. If Herbert Armstrong is excited about it, I'm excited about it."

Then number two, I think of the book he wrote, *The Incredible Human Potential*. This was the first account of murmuring and complaining that I heard in such a massive way that began to come out of more within the ministry, in that respect, of different individuals who went so far in their thinking. It revealed something I didn't grasp at that time, that they didn't have God's spirit. To come to a conclusion like that, because this was over a process of time that he began to see some of these things and then wrote the book.

This was actually beginning to come out way ahead of time in '72 and on and some of the things he began to address and talking about the mind of human beings and how God created us and made us and so forth. Incredible book that God inspired to be written.

Then number three. Then came 1974, change in the day of the week to observe Pentecost. Then it really blew up more. So, there were these thundering's, type of thundering's at that particular time, rumblings if you will, because that was prophesied to take place as well. Because when it talks about earthquakes in the Bible, Matthew 24, it's not a physical earthquake. It's word for a shaking that's taking place within God's Church. The shaking got greater in God's Church, and this was a big one here.

So, in 1974 then a change in the day for the observance for Pentecost. He took a year to do it. There were people, there were ministers in Church areas that left because he didn't make the decision soon enough to move to Sunday. There were others that if they changed it from a Monday they were gone. That's what happened. Some leaders pretty far up in God's Church in service went different directions, started different groups because of those things. It gave them excuse.

They just need an excuse because some on one side actually wanted to do some of the things that led up to the Apostasy. They wanted to change the Sabbath as well. They had other motives for some of the things they did, and they were disgruntled about some of the things. God's spirit wasn't in them for a long time to be able to do something like that of that measure.

So again, in 1974 Herbert Armstrong made the change then. And you know what? To me, what was so profound, it was kind of like you go through the Red Sea, and you see this miracle. You see this awesome miracle. This is incredible! You find water, and all of a sudden, Moses throws whatever that was, a bush, tree, or whatever, throws it in the water and now it's clean. And on and on it goes these things we're reading through. Manna. You go out and gather it and no one has ever had manna before. There's nothing like this. Yet it appears at a certain time and other times it doesn't. Like, on the Sabbath it's not there. On and on it goes. You witness these things.

This was one of those things for me. It was like, before all the decision was made some things started to be said ahead of time so you could begin to grasp where things were headed, but there was a point in time there where I would have sat down with anyone, and I would prove to you it was on a Monday. Convicted! We were all convicted, that's why we kept it on a Monday. It was clear to us.

But it wasn't clear, because God has to open the mind, especially of His people. He has the power to do that within His own people who have the impregnation of His holy spirit, of when to see something spiritually. Not a physical proof of something, "I can take my Bible and I can go to these scriptures, and I can prove this, and I can prove that." Because that's just a bunch of you-know-what and something that's so deceived people through Philadelphia and Laodicea, candidly, people who held on to some of that kind of thinking. God has to give it. He has to give it up here to see it spiritually to where there is conviction because it's a matter of belief and faith that God puts in the mind.

After that was made it was like, how could we have ever believed that it was on a Monday? It's so clear! It's like, why didn't we see it before? Well, that's a part of our learning process. The reason we couldn't see it is because God didn't put it in our minds yet. He didn't give it to Herbert Armstrong yet. He could have given it to Herbert Armstrong when He first revealed to him and his wife that there were seven annual Holy Days to be kept. But they kept it on their own for seven years before ever teaching it to the Church because of the conviction, the unity and oneness he wanted to be convicted of before God before he would take that step. Because he didn't have anyone verbally telling him this is what it is and this is how you know. God hadn't put it all into His mind yet. He had to go through a process, and he was going to do it faithfully. Awesome!

So anyway, these things should affect us; when something like this comes along we should learn from it. This is one of those that I learned from that was incredible benefit to me. It's like, because I started seeing more clearly God has to give it. Those who can't, there's a reason why they can't. They're cut off from God's spirit. That should be so clear. So, we have to go through things to learn, to become in oneness with God. He doesn't just throw it all into our mind because we have to have the experience of it. Experience of life is different from knowledge. Knowledge, of what value is it if we don't have experience with it.

It's like individuals who used to get up after getting right out of Ambassador College and going up and giving a sermon about childrearing and they don't have any children. You could tell something was missing here. They've never had children. We learn from that, and when you have children then you begin to become wiser, you're able to see and understand things in a way you really can't by knowledge. And on and on it goes.

So, any truth that God gives we go through the experience of observing various things, of keeping certain things, and because of that experience and because of all the experiences of

life, because He's working with us all the time, it's only up to us whether we receive it or not once He gives it. Awesome.

Number four. After that was where Herbert Armstrong became ill with heart problems, and a far greater murmuring and rumouring and unrest was spreading throughout the Church in the ministry. Now, I really didn't grasp it fully to the magnitude that it was until later on. Because we live through things, and candidly, God had a means of protecting people in the Church. Because if we had seen everything we weren't to a point where we'd really be able to handle it properly as a Body, as a Church worldwide.

So, we were really protected from a lot of knowledge of what was going on, of what was happening in the Church. Again, there were blessings to a lot of that, that kind of protection. Because there are a lot of people who just wouldn't have been able to keep going forward, to think that "If this is happening in God's Church then I'm gone. This isn't God's Church." That type of thing. Many other lessons as well.

So, he became ill and so what happens? Who's going to take his place? Most likely going to be an evangelist, huh? So, where do we put our chips behind? This one here? This one here? Or this one over here? Because they're all kind of vying for support. That was going on! Mind-boggling. Human beings vying for support. Now, there was one who was pretty cocky about his position and there were more supporting him. His own son. What a horrible thing. What a horrible, horrible thing that took place.

There were those who wanted to do that, but there were others who already knew how he was living in certain cases, and he wasn't really living fully this way of life, because they knew of some things going on that others didn't know about fully. So, they cast their support somewhere else because they didn't believe that was going to work out and they didn't like that. Incredible division was taking place.

I mean, to have lived through these things, it's mind-boggling what we've gone through. But consider God and being in the presence of Almighty God, and being God's Church, and to think these kinds of things could happen, that people could rebel and murmur against God, against God's servant? Just going through scripture and seeing how God dealt with those who murmured against, complained against, made fun of, whatever it might be, God's servants and how God dealt with them should teach a very powerful lesson. But again, that depends on God's spirit to the depth it's in the mind or lacking. That in itself should create a kind of fear to do otherwise. Not to fear God, but to respect that and honor that and recognize this is the way it's supposed to be. That'd be the last thing on earth I'd want to do. Just like working on Friday night or whatever or going in on the Sabbath and working and on my job because they gave me this boo-hoo story that they can't rely on anyone else. So, I'll go in this week. It comes around two more months later, I'll go in this week again.

Now, if your mind is such you don't care what they do. "I don't care if you go bankrupt, I'm sorry, I'm not coming in. I'll go somewhere else. I'll find something else because God will help

me to have it, whatever it is. But I'm not going to do that." There are people who have given in by things like that. "Oh, just a half an hour until we get somebody to the store. If you'll just stay there. This is an emergency."

"This is the ox in the ditch." Now, they don't tell the person in the Church that, but that's what goes on in the person's mind. "This must be the ox in the ditch. It's okay." Now, there are times when there's an ox in a ditch, but if you're looking to God and looking to God's spirit you're going to be able to come to conclusions and decisions that are pleasing to God.

How do you handle that? How do you deal with that? "Okay, I'll go down there and lock up the place and put a sign on the door. That takes care of that. Don't have to worry about working there and let the chips fall where they may. If the boss didn't like it, I'll go find something else. God will help me. God will bless me."

So, people are tested in things like that. What are you going to do? It's amazing what we go through, the experiences we go through to learn. If we grasp we're in the presence of God, that God is here all the time for us, that God has a purpose for us, He loves us, He called us for a purpose, the way is wide open for us. All we have to do is walk it. That's all we have to do. Everything is there for us to be successful, to succeed. Of becoming a part of God's Family, nothing should get in the way, nothing. Nothing. What is it? What is it?

That's why I love what Paul had to say in Romans there, "What is it that's going to separate us from the love of Christ, the love of God? What trial? What hardship? What spirit being? Nothing. No power. Not even death." That's a choice. Amazing.

So again, murmuring. This was some of the worst. These were some of the worst of times, of things that were going on. The college was going down the tubes. You could tell it. By the time I graduated in 1975 there was a world of difference between Bricket Wood, Big Sandy, and Pasadena, California. Now, those who were at Bricket Wood were looked down upon because it was like, "You're a bunch of self-righteous, far to the right people." In part we might have been. But it's far rather to better be there than to be disobeying and making compromise somewhere else until you grow and are able to handle the balance of things better.

It was at that point that I made comment about various things that happened at college that time, like the Feast that year. Different ones were given different jobs to go out to different Feast sites from Ambassador College to help and serve in the Feast administration, different things that took place, whether it be like in Lake of the Ozarks where they had these booths or tents or whatever it was, where people could get drinks or snacks or something even, or whether maybe something. Anyway, whatever was going on we had different jobs of different things. Perhaps a youth program or perhaps young adults or singles or whatever it might be, whatever categories we had at that time.

But I remember—and pardon me for going through the story again—being given the responsibility to work with a couple of youth projects at that time. Later it was known a



Y.O.U.. It wasn't yet at that time. So, what became known as Youth Opportunities United later on, it was a structured format for teenagers within the Church. So, we still had programs.

This was one where there was going to be a dance and someone had rented the boat and then I'm to go oversee this, that everything runs smoothly, that the band gets on board that someone had hired (not me, but someone else). They had made an agreement, which I didn't know about, a different band came on board than the one they originally had, but it was like, "Okay, go ahead, come on," and there wasn't much went into it. Anyway, it wasn't too good at that time, especially for where we were in the Church, to have that kind of commotion and raucous.

I came out of a music background where I knew how it affected me. Music is very powerful, and it affected me before I ever came into God's Church in a very adverse way. People don't think music has power, but it has tremendous power. That's why we have to be careful of how much we put into the mind and what it is or what it says and so forth. If you don't think that affects people's thinking when it comes to being out and drinking or carousing or being together with a group, if people don't understand that then that's too bad. Because most people don't want that anyway that accept it.

Anyway, we went out on this paddleboat, big ole paddleboat, couple different decks. Anyway, the first two or three songs were fine. Everything was going along well, people were dancing, and then they let loose. I'm sure they heard us from shore to shore, and we were quite a way out on the lake. And so, I went down and talked to them. I said, "Hey, this is a church organization, church group that's meeting together here and we really don't prefer that kind of music, so we'd prefer that you'd kind of play what you did in the first two or three." They didn't like that, but they went ahead and started with another song that was okay.

So, I'm gone a little way away from there and all of a sudden here it goes again. You know what, I really didn't care at that point in time. It's like, "You're going to do it. We're paying you." I have a job to do, I'm going to go talk to them again. Wasn't pleasant but I knew I had to do it. So, I went up and told them again. And so they took the mic, the guy says, "Okay, how many of you want to hear what we played at the beginning?" Hmm. "How many of you want to hear what we just finished, that kind of music?" "Yay! Yay! We want that!"

I said, "I don't care. I don't care what some of them want to hear, I'm telling you what we're going to do. So, you'll either play that or not." They said, "No." And I said, "We're done." I went to the captain, had him take it back to port, and the thing is over.

Next day...? Some of them were ministers children who didn't like my decision. And so, there was this divisiveness already taking place within the Church. Some would have liked to have gotten hold of me, and some did get a hold of me, and it went through different ones and thankfully there were a couple of evangelists back at the college who backed it up, said, glad someone was willing to do something like that.

Anyway, a learning process. But even here it was people's attitudes and the kind of things that people were doing in Pasadena. Because the college had closed in '74 in Bricket Wood. They told us we could either go to Big Sandy or Pasadena. I chose Big Sandy. I was drawn there for a very important reason. Anyway, but Pasadena was far more liberal, and it was known. The Church knew it. Anybody that went from Pasadena and the college out there knew it was far more liberal than Big Sandy. Don't even bring Bricket Wood into the issue because we were looked upon as Pharisees and far to the right.

But anyway, what horrible thing that you see this taking place in God's Church, people doing things, becoming promiscuous, doing things that aren't right. Different ministers backing up this move to the left, if you will, of being more liberal. Anyway, this is what was happening in God's Church because Mr. Armstrong was getting weaker as time went along, and then the heart problems came along. All this just worked together to bring out different attitudes of different evangelists and ministers underneath them, of sides that were being chosen.

You think of that kind of thing to take place in God's Church, it's almost unthinkable that it could have happened. It isn't now because we've experienced an Apostasy on top of that that's far, far worse. But it all lead to that. We should be able to see the progression and why it happened and why God allowed it. He didn't stop it because people were being tried through that entire... What are you going to choose? What are you going to choose? What is your relationship with God? What do you believe? Awesome!

Number five. Then within the midst of some of these things over a period of within those years, different things had been happening, and became more disconcerting and divisive within the Church to understand what was happening to Herbert Armstrong's son and how he had to be disciplined by his own father at different times. Pulled back, removed from responsibilities for a time.

This had a tough effect on God's Church in one respect. It was good. It was right. It was positive and it should have been done. But others who were kind of clinging on to that side and had seen him on TV and came in (because that's the voice they heard, because he's the one they saw) many were moved in that particular direction. So, they had to deal with something. How is God's Church being led, guided, and directed? What am I supposed to do? What do I support? Well, it shouldn't have been an issue, but it was.

People had to go through different things to be tried and tested to see what they would do. That's God's refining process. He gave us tens of thousands of people within a unique environment within the Church and out of that different ones were being refined and brought more to the surface and they were dealing with the things and becoming purer, in that respect because they were dealing with it in the way God wanted them to. Others were making other choices and God was rejecting them and they began to be cut off from the Church. It's always been that way. Incredible, that these things have happened.

So, when I think about God saying to the Israelites, “These ten times, look at what you have done.” “Look at what the children of Israel have done to bring us to this point that you’re about to go into the promised land, that the spies have been sent out and now the tenth time and look what you have done! What am I to do?” God knew what He was going to do from the very beginning. Forty years wasn’t an accident. The spies going out was not an accident.

I hope we understand the power of Almighty God to bring about a plan and a purpose, to allow different ones to fulfill different functions, like ten spies and two others who came back with a faithful witness, and ten who didn’t. Just happened? Coincidence? The seventy palms? The twelve wells? People can think that’s coincidence. It wasn’t coincidence at all.

Everything has meaning that God does. The numbers who went in the promised land, the twelve who went into the promised land, by design. Ten? By design. Two faithful? By design. God had two he was going to work with to bring through all that who would serve Him faithfully, and God put them there for a purpose. Caleb and Joshua. Awesome! It wasn’t an accident.

My point is I hope we grasp the power of Almighty God on a spiritual plane because that’s a spiritual process of working with those two individuals in their minds as He was, to do something different than the rest. If we grasp that kind of presence it’s on a spiritual plane, that’s a benefit to us, a stronger relationship with Almighty God, truly is. What an awesome thing.

They saw it on a physical plane, most did, but some experienced it on a spiritual plane because they were being worked with by Almighty God for 144,000. Awesome to understand these things and to see how God works and why He works the way He does.

So again, I hope we grasp then more deeply the different between the physical presence of God and then see how much more God has elevated us to a spiritual presence and what that should mean to us, that sometimes we really don’t grasp to the depth we need to strive to. We need to strive to grow in that more and more and more.

Let’s go back now to the next five when Israel rebelled against God.

So, the next is in Exodus 17. After leaving the Wilderness of Sin the Israelites came to Rephidim and once again begin complaining because there was no water to drink. They’ve done this before and they’re doing it again. Its like, how many times? How many times are you going to keep complaining about different things? Haven’t you learned? Food, you didn’t have any food - gave you food. You’re not hungry. You don’t have to worry about that. Gave you water each time. You’re not dying, no one has died because of that. Now, some died because of rebellion. People die spiritually because of rebellion, too.

So, they began murmuring again against Moses saying, “Why is it that you have brought us up out of Egypt to kill us?” It’s like, “You have brought us up here to kill us, to put us to death.” “He shouldn’t build that building. God’s trying to show him a different way.”

**Exodus 17:3- Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?** So, Moses asked God to intervene. He said, even the children of Israel, it says, were ready to stone him. So, this happened more than once. “They’re ready to kill me.”

Now, I hope as we go along with the story that you recognize that Moses was getting pretty worn out. He really was. I mean, I marvel at all that he went through in having hundreds of thousands of people and going through all of this, and here they are ready to turn against you after everything that’s gone on, after everything... You think, yep.

God told Moses to take the rod and strike it or strike the rock of Horeb and the water would come out, and so it did. There he called the place Massah, which means “tempted,” and also Meribah, which means “dispute; quarrel; complaining; contention.” So again, two words here that describe that region, gave it two names of what it was.

Exodus 19, number seven. This is the account of God gathering the children of Israel before Mount Sinai and the people being afraid of what they were witnessing or going to witness, if you will, at that time concerning the physical manifestation of those things that God let them see to reveal His presence was with them. Now, He’s already done it over and over again by intervening at different times. They should have been able to see that.

But God used this display in a more powerful way, all physical, to stir up fear, fear to disobey God. He has incredible power; you don’t go near the mount, you will die. Now, they believed that, so they didn’t do it. They’d seen enough to be convicted of that at least or convinced. They’re not going to take that chance. They already saw what He did to Pharaoh and the army.

Too bad that some don’t grasp when they quit tithing that they’re going to die. It’s too bad that some don’t grasp it when they think that they have this relationship, that’s pulling them away from the Church, that that’s going to cause them to die. Because they have to make compromise with whatever it might be to turn away from God, whether it be the Sabbath or their tithing because the individual wants them not to tithe, and so they give into that.

This has happened thousands and thousands of times in God’s Church, and it’s gone on to this point in time still. Still happens from time to time. Just continues to happen. They don’t realize they’re going to die two ways. One physical because they will not live in a new age. I hope we’re convicted of that with all of our being. Only by the mercy of God if they haven’t gone too far in betraying God in taking the sacrifice of Christ so lightly - which some things are said in scripture sometimes I wonder, because it hasn’t been fully revealed what God’s judgment is in some of that, of what that really means, of how hard that really is, of how bad that really is to do such a thing.

And so fear is good. Not to fear God, to love God. But that should help us to get through certain things as well. I mean, who would think of working on the Sabbath day? Who would think of working on a Holy Day? Who would think of not tithing to God? But it happens. Mind-boggling.

Again here, this particular account here, brought them up to Mount Sinai, and the purpose, in that respect was, for fear. Let's go through some scriptures here. Let's go through Exodus 20, start there, and just see a part of a process. Because this begins in Exodus 19 and goes through 32, this entire process and all the lessons that came out of this, of what transpired.

**Exodus 20:18—Now all the people witnessed the thundering, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet...** I think of how these things, God was revealing His presence before them in a physical manifestation and a very powerful way. I think of the exact same things on a far greater scale that are going to happen to change this world, to bring mankind to a point where God's government is going to reign on the earth.

**...the thundering, the lightning, the sound of the trumpet.** You think that has any parallel meaning to it to be learned from, to be sobered by? **...and the mountain smoking.** Nations smoking. It's going to happen to help bring people into a realization this is God's presence. God is allowing this. That's what they have to come to grasp. Nations are responsible for the vast majority, but there are other things happening that are not that, that God Himself is bringing upon mankind.

**...and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off.** Fear can be good and healthy in that respect then if people learn to respect what God says, to listen to what God says.

**Verse 19—Then they said to Moses, You speak with us, and we will hear; but do not let God speak with us, unless we die.** Now, there are other scriptures that talk about what they couldn't hear was the law. They had problems with it. That's what they were afraid of. They were afraid of that power as well, but there was more to it than that. It was about what they were hearing. They didn't like it.

I mean, you take a people who don't have a lot of morality, because they didn't. They were just living carnally as other human beings and now there are these laws to live by from Almighty God, who brought you out of Egypt. Don't commit adultery? That's going to affect a lot of them. Think that it wasn't going on? It's going to affect a lot of people. On and on it goes. Stealing? You think people didn't do that?

It wasn't the Church of God leaving Egypt, and even there, there would have been adultery, there would have been stealing, and on and on it goes. Because it's happened in God's Church ever since I've been in it.

**Verse 20—And Moses said to the people, Do not fear; for God has come to test you.** "He's in our presence. He's here on this mountain in great power that He's given you to see to test you." **...that His fear may be before you,** because that's healthy, that's a beginning, that you live right. That was a carnal nation, had to be dealt with on a physical plane.

...so that you do not sin. So the people stood far off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was. Then the Eternal said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.

Get the correct translation of that. Some places are so far they just don't have it, period. It says (not this, that's not what is said at all), **You shall not make Elohim, Gods of silver, or God's (Elohim) of gold. You shall not make gold Gods.** That's exactly what He said.

Let's jump on forward now because all this comes together. Exodus 24, that's what He told them. Right away this is where they failed. After what He said right here, "Don't do this!" Isn't that mind-boggling? Of all the things that I'm telling you right now, of all what God gave Moses to tell them was this point right here. Why? God knew exactly what was going to happen. God knew! God knows what human beings will do under certain circumstances. A very carnal people, it wasn't hard to know exactly what they're going to do. "Make some other gods take us back to Egypt. They're the ones that let us out at least."

**Exodus 24:12**, jump ahead, **Then the Eternal said to Moses...** So, farther up here in the story. **Come up to be with Me in the mountain and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law of commandments which I have written, so that you may teach them.** It's going to be a permanent thing. "This is what you'll have. This is what you're to teach."

**So Moses rose up with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, notice this, verse 14, He said to the elders, Wait here for us until we come back to you.** Hmm, okay. It's amazing how human beings think. Do this, don't do that.

Don't go up above this particular street and look for a Feast site for the Church of God, in Orlando. Don't go up there. Sandy Lake. Don't go above it. Stay below it. Come back to me with a nice report of a hotel up there north of Sandy Lake. I think that's the name of the street. "It'd be great! The hotels are a good price, and we could probably work out a deal there." Hmm. What were you told? Rebellion, rebellion, rebellion, not listening to God.

**Wait for us here until we come back to you.** Simple, simple thing to those who are leaders, supposed to be the main leaders underneath Moses to serve the people. **Indeed, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any, says "man" here but the word is "lord," in other words, any leader, because that's who he was speaking to, has a question, let him go to them.** So, if something comes up go talk to them. They will take care of it.

**Then Moses went up unto the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain.** He's gone. Can't see him. Don't know where he went. Thick cloud. They saw it come in. Moses disappeared.

**Verse 16—Now the glory of the Eternal rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days.** But that's not all. **And on the seventh day He said to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the Eternal, so it goes on to show here. It says, And the sight of the glory of the Eternal was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain.** So what

they saw from below this cloud was gone but now what they see is fire. Can you imagine a whole mountain, a mountaintop like that and what you see is like fire coming out of it? They've seen a lot of things so far, Red Sea being a big one, but man, this is much bigger. "And God spoke, and we wanted Moses to speak to us, and now look up there. And you know what? Moses is up there. That's where Moses went. All we see is fire." Think that might cause a little doubt to start festering a little bit on the seventh day there?

**It was like a consuming fire on the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.** This is what they could see.

**So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.** Not thirty-nine, not forty-one, not thirty-six, forty. Why? Forty should have a lot of meaning, especially for us by this time if we understand it.

What are they going to do? Anyway, some of these you kind of have to chuckle at because it's like we are so thick headed sometimes. We're so stubborn. We're so selfish. Human nature, it's sickening and when you really understand the whole story you learn how sickening it is.

God made us this way for a reason, to be of a mind that's against Him. That's mind-boggling. He made us to be of a mind that resists Him, that's against Him. "The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" unless God draw and call and work with an individual. They can't. It's impossible.

Now, that's mind-boggling to grasp and comprehend that. Really awesome to understand it. The more we grasp where that mind is and why God gave that mind, it's the mind of Satan. Selfishness. That's what He wanted us to experience, to be with as human beings, to have a mind that was contrary to Him. Satan was the first to become contrary to God, to become anti-God, against God.

I'm going to go ahead and call it off here because we're already up to 4 o'clock. But basically this had an affect on them. Now, the six days already did. Moses disappeared in the clouds, and they're supposed to wait for him to come back. Now on the seventh day the cloud, talks about here, what took place. Talk about something now they could see from the bottom, nothing but fire. That's what it looked like to them. Moses is up there, "Wonder what happened to Moses." They're supposed to wait another 33 days. Did they? Nope. Human nature, not going to do it that way. There are reasons. Because Moses went up there, we don't know what's happened to him. There's fire up there. Who can live through that?

Anyway, if you think that didn't enter the minds, just think about some of these stories as we go through it and we're going to come back to this next Sabbath then.

But I want to read one more verse here. Because that's what they said. After this, if you go through the story here from Exodus 24 on up to Exodus 32 God is up there speaking with Moses and telling him about judgments and so forth whereby Israel was to be judged, how to judge,

various kinds of judgments so that the people could understand how to judge, what was being done, and how they were to live. Then other instruction concerning the construction of a movable temple, if you will, at that time, the tabernacle was given, then all the things that were to be in it, and also the priesthood and offerings and various things that God gave instruction in in that period of forty days.

So, quite an intensive training and instruction from God Almighty of something that he heard was being given to him—mind-boggling—during this forty days.

We're going to stop here in **Exodus 32** then, jumping forward, because all these things were talked about up to this point. **Verse 1—Now, when the people saw that Moses**, it says, "**delayed**" but it is not the word for "delayed." It's a unique word.

Well, candidly, we're going into that next week. We'll just wait. It wasn't a matter of being delayed. There's more to the story. He was, it took longer than what they expected, but there's more to the story. Awesome!