

We're covering the series entitled *In God's Presence*, and this is *Part 4*.

Early in this series we came to where the journey of the Israelites had come, to where they were about to be taken into the promised land. This is the point where Moses had sent twelve individuals into that area to spy it out and then ten came back and gave a bad report, a negative report, a gloom ridden report.

It reminds me of things that have gone on in God's Church for ages, of how every once in a while there are rumblings, things happen, and there are those who rise up that give a gloom ridden report about things that they believe are going on or happening that they don't agree with, and blah, blah, blah. Anyway, I mentioned some of those things concerning Herbert Armstrong and things that had happened over time. And again, that's just our history.

It's the history of Israel, it's our history in the Church, and that's why it's good for us to think about some of those things sometimes. Because we can look at the Israelites, hard-headed, hard-hearted, and think, man, they were bad, and the reality is a lot of times we've been far worse because we have had, we have (those who have left) had access to God's holy spirit. They didn't. So, to go that route to me is far, far worse. Once your mind has been opened, a person has been called into God's Church, and then they rise up to murmur, to complain against whatever that they don't agree with.

So, we see Joshua and Caleb, however, who came back. They were positive, they were excited about it, and explaining quite clearly that they were confident. They saw all the things God had done. They believed "God's going to give us this land; we don't have to worry about it." But the people responded by believing the ten, and so they were crying out, crying throughout the night, murmuring and complaining against Moses, not understanding that they were complaining and murmuring against God. But that's, again, carnal human nature even in God's Church in times past.

Now we're going to review a little more than usual of what we had covered last Sabbath because it's important to grasp the sequence of some of the events in order to understand what really happened. Because some of this, I don't just like to read it as a story because a lot of times we can read through the story of what took place, read it. We just read it as a story quickly, but we don't stop and think about all the things involved in it. Why? Why did this happen? What can we learn from this, and so forth.

So, first of all here, God spoke to Moses about the Israelites responding in the manner that they had. That's in Numbers 14:22 where God responded in this manner, though they have done this, this is what's going to happen. It says, "For all the people will see My glory, in the signs which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness." Now, that doesn't mean right then and there. There are

things that God gives and states at certain times that have to do with His purpose and His plan for the future, and this is a part of that. He was making it very clear that there's going to come the time where people, whether they believe it or not, whether they accept it or not, in a great resurrection, as an example, in the Great White Throne, people are going to be exposed to the truth. They're going to be shown and told the power, the might of Almighty God, and everyone is going to hear it and they're going to see of that glory. In other words, those things happened, they took place, the amount of witnesses there will be of that after a resurrection, and obviously, the resurrection of those who are in God's Family already witness of those kinds of things, glorifies God. It shows the power and might of Almighty God to do the things He's done.

Then He goes on to say, "Yet those who have put Me to the test now these ten times and have not listened to My voice..." and we stopped there. This is where we continue on then in some of the things that have to do with those ten times. We started reviewing some of that. We'll come back to this portion of the story later on, but it's a good exercise to look at those ten times that the Israelites murmured and complained and griped against God, against Moses, first of all, and what took place.

We were on the seventh time that they had rebelled, and this seventh time happened after God had spoken to them from Mount Sinai giving them the 10 Commandments. It had to be an incredible thing that took place, the power that they witnessed. I mean, they saw an incredible thing when they went through the Red Sea. This here was different in the sense that it was scary. That there isn't so scary when you have the Egyptians behind you and you see the ground is dry and people going out in front of you, especially the first ones out, it's easier to follow them.

But this here was different with that kind of power that they were witnessing because of what was taking place on Mount Sinai, and then the sound, that power that they heard when God declared those commandments. The children of Israel then asked Moses that he speak to them and not God anymore. Which other places in scripture reveal that it was about because of the law really—that was the motivation of it, though it was scary and so forth—it was too much for them. And with that kind of power and authority, it was too much.

So before God took Moses to the top of Mount Sinai (we came to that point), He told Moses to speak one more thing to the Israelites. That's why we focused on this and are going to focus on it again.

Exodus 20:22. So, this is after all this had happened. God is going to take Moses up there. **Then the Eternal said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel...** So, "One more thing that you're to say before you come up on Mount Sinai." **You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven,** and I just gave the correct translation of verse 23 because it's messed up. **You shall not make elohim,** as the word is, which is "gods" in this case, **of silver or gods**

of gold. You shall not make gods of gold. I mean, how much clearer can you be? Don't make gods of silver. Don't make gods of gold. And just don't make gods of gold, period.

Exodus 24:12, little farther down, **Then the Eternal said to Moses, Come up to be with Me in the mountain, and I will give you tablets of stone, of the law of commandments which I have written so that you may teach them. So Moses rose up, with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, Wait here until we come back to you.**

Simple instruction. Not difficult. Not hard. Don't make gods of gold. And now, in this particular case here, to the leaders that were left behind there, wait, wait until I come back. I gave that example of potential Feast site in Florida one year where I'd asked some individuals, "Don't go north of Sandy Lake Road when you're looking at all these hotels." I can't help it. That pops into my mind because here was the beginning of some problems that were going to come up later on that had to be addressed at that point in time.

Then it goes on to say, **Indeed, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man, and it's not the word for "man" at all. It's any "leader" basically, it's the word for "lord." If any leader has a question, let him go to them.** So in other words, if something comes up there are individuals to go to to ask questions from the other leaders here. **Then Moses went up into the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain.**

In **verse 16** it says, **Now the glory of the Eternal rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days.** So, children of Israel are able to see these things and here this cloud is there and goes on to say, **And on the seventh day He called Moses out of the midst of the cloud.**

So on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. **And the sight of the Eternal was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.** So, this is an awesome thing. All of a sudden now there is this cloud, what they see from their vantage point, and all of a sudden it changed after the seventh day and now there is this consuming fire up on top of Mount Sinai all the way up. This is what they see, this power that they're witnessing in a physical manifestation of God's power.

So, Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mountain. But the children of Israel, now remember what they saw from their vantage point, "it was like a consuming fire in the eyes of the children of Israel," from what they could see from below.

Then it says, **Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.** It doesn't take long for people to begin to become a little disillusioned. They were supposed to wait. Yes, if need be, forty days and forty nights down below. That's what they were told to do. "You are to wait for me here."

There are plenty of people to bring them supplies, to bring them food, but Moses said, "You are to wait here until I come down." Incredible! Well, that began to work on them. Simple

instruction, but not so easy sometimes to follow through with. Our human nature, if we're not careful, especially in a factor of time here. Now, if something is quick, that's one thing, but... and we oftentimes can slip on that one there, fall on that one. Just like I mentioned about Florida that year.

But if it's a longer period of time then whew. Again, I already mentioned this, but I really think of Mr. Armstrong when this matter of Pentecost came up. He told everyone he wasn't going to make this decision quickly. He was going to go through a process, and that process took up to a year to come to. When he finally decided and determined and told the Church the results of everything, that understanding, knowing now that Pentecost was not to be observed on a Monday but on a Sunday. So, he did it very methodically, very systematically, and a lot of that because of a right kind of fear and awe before God to want to teach and do the right thing.

Just like keeping the Holy Days for seven years. He wanted to be deeply convicted that this is the right thing to do. He didn't just jump out and do it, especially in the beginning as God was beginning to reveal things to the Church. This was a very young stage for the Church back at that time. And so later on then when this matter of Pentecost came up there were people who couldn't wait.

There were people, ministers, who got upset because he was taking so long to do this to make a decision here. People all over on the issue of finding fault. Incredible, the human mind. So, a year. Not too much to ask of God's people. The vast majority of the people were very content with that. "He's God's apostle. We'll wait and we'll wait for the result. And when he says it," and when he did say it, it was like, amazing, all this time you could prove by your understanding to that point in time, to that present truth, that it was on a Monday. You could prove it. Now I look at that and think, wow, crazy, because it was so wrong.

Anyway, forty days and forty nights. Just too much for them. That's a part of the story here that becomes important as we go on.

Then God continued by giving Moses various matters of judgment for the people and other instruction, so about the judgments, and instruction concerning those things about the construction of that moveable tent like temple, if you will, structure that was to be transported at different times if need be, which took place, of the tabernacle and the contents for it and the offerings and other things that were there as well, the matter of the priesthood being established. So, during that period of time it was jammed pack with God giving instruction about these matters to Moses.

Exodus 32:1—Now, when the people saw that Moses... It uses the word "delayed" as I mentioned last week. We're going to look a little bit more of it now because this is the juncture where we're at. The word "delayed," yes, that's what was happening, but that isn't the real thrust and the meaning of this word, if you will. It's a word that has to do more with being ashamed.

There's a thought here, the thinking is what's important of those individuals. Now, when it says "the people" you have to realize what people it's talking about first and foremost. It's talking about those leaders who were to do a certain thing and failed to do it the way God said to do it, the way Moses gave instruction, which is a matter of God.

So again, the account is one of Moses being gone for a long while then delayed, indeed, seems to fit. Sometimes they have a difficult time translating certain things because they don't understand what was taking place, what's happening in the mind of individuals and certain instruction that's given before. To so many it's just a story. No, it's far more than a story.

It's the response that's important to understand here, the response that they were having to his being gone as long as he was and how that worked upon them and how it worked in their thinking. Because they got to a point where they were made to, in their minds, felt a little stupid for staying as long as they did. "Nothing's happened. That mount, it's on fire! All we see are flames. Forty days, forty nights he's up there. We don't know what's happened to him and we're here? It's obvious he's not coming back." That's the mind. That's how it works. Impatient, can't follow instruction, not moved yet by all that God had performed for them, still not listening to Moses. Amazing!

That's why I marvel at our history, and I think of the proof of things that came along from everything that was given to Herbert Armstrong starting with, if you will, just the Holy Days alone, when they kept them for seven years, him and Loma, alone. And then all the other things.

Because no one had any understanding of anything that was true to that point in time except that God revealed it through His apostle. They didn't have any of that. They didn't have any of those truths. They didn't come to these things on their own. They didn't understand the things that God had given to Herbert Armstrong to grasp, to comprehend, to teach to the Church. Amazing! Awesome!

The proof was there for anyone having God's spirit of who Herbert Armstrong was. That's why I've been blessed to really zero in on some of those things in this book. Because they're moving, they're proof of God and how He works.

So again here, this word that's translated oftentimes as "ashamed," that's how it's so often translated in scripture, not as "delayed," at all. It has more the thought of being confounded by what was going on. "Don't understand this. He told us to stay here but look where he's been and how long he's been gone." They didn't have any answers for anything. So, what do we do?

So, they indeed were confounded, but it's also related to being embarrassed or humiliated. These are leaders who don't want to be humiliated in the sense of not knowing exactly what's happening and what's going on. Amazing!

There's this need when it comes to thinking you have authority and power over people (that's oftentimes how people take it), because this has happened in the Church, this has happened in

the ministry, this has happened with evangelists in God's Church over and over and over again. Have to be in the know. Have to know exactly what's going on. If not, then they're going to say what they believe is really going on, because "If I don't give an answer that's embarrassing. We have authority. We have power. We know."

It used to be that way in God's Church! Those of you who have been around for a long time, you know how it was in the sense that a minister saying, "Well, I don't know that. I don't have the answer to that." It's like, "You don't have the answer?" I hope some of you remember some of those times. Because it was expected anything you ask can be answered by that individual. Bull! And when they didn't know they came up with some kind of an answer because otherwise it's embarrassing. Because it's this idea that we have this power, this authority, and with that we know.

I look at that and I think of different examples, and this area here reeked with it in the sense of leadership, of that kind of spirit. It's a sickening, perverted, really disgusting attitude and spirit. So, it's wise to wait. It's good to ask questions. It's good to say, "I don't know." It's good to say, "We don't know that at this time. That hasn't been revealed. We haven't learned that from God's apostle, Herbert Armstrong," whatever it might be at that time.

So again, in this case a far better translation: **Now, the people**, not all the people, those people, those leaders. They were the leaders; they were the primary leaders. As much as the evangelists at headquarters were leaders and didn't tell the ministry for the two years that they knew what was coming, what was being plotted and planned, of turning everything upside down, of going against the Sabbath and the Holy Days. They didn't even know the extent of what was coming but they knew that was in the works by some and didn't warn anyone. Knew that the idea, the thought of literature being printed and prepared was taking place but didn't warn any of us in the ministry out in the field. How do we know if we're not told? Incredible.

Now, the people felt humiliated looking for Moses to come down from the mountain, so the people gathered together to Aaron. And who went to Aaron? It wasn't hundreds of thousands of people. They couldn't do that. It was the leaders. The system was set up. The leaders did it.

That's why I told two elders one time, "It's coming, and you have to decide right now. You don't have time to think about this. Where are you?" And if we don't know where we stand all the time? You think, what a shame. We should always know where we stand. Shouldn't have been a hard thing. Next day it goes out I was mean to them, I was really mean to them, shouted at them, mean to them. Because I told them they have to make a decision right now of what they're going to do. Incredible. "Support Tkach or support what you've always been taught when you first came into the Church."

So again here, **The people gathered together unto Aaron and said to him, Come, make us gods, which shall go before us.** "Gods we can see. Gods we can put our hands on. Gods we can relate to." That's basically what it is because it's carnal physical thing. It's a physical thing. How do you make gods? Hmm.

Make us gods that shall go before us. For this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what happened to him. “Forty days! Isn’t that long enough? He’s been gone that long and look, it’s on fire. Who can live through that?” It’s easy to see how they might think.

So Aaron said to them... What a horrible thing he did. Mind-boggling. He gave into the pressure, to the stress of the time, and so many in the past have given in to the pressure of the moment and listened to something else they should not have listened to.

I’m sorry, but I can’t help but think of history over and over and over again, everything that led up to the Apostasy, everything that happened after the Apostasy, and on we go. These things should ring in our minds, those of you who went through it. Those of you who didn’t to learn from that, to understand our human nature, to understand what we’re like.

So Aaron said to them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, your daughters, and bring them to me. So, the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron who received it from their hand. And he fashioned it with an engraving tool and made a molten calf. Then they said, This is your god, O Israel... Who said that? These same leaders. That’s mind-boggling that something on a physical plane could happen like that. But what happened with the Apostasy and choices people made is far, far, far worse. Truly is.

Then they said, This is your God, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt. So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Eternal. So this mixing. Feast to the Eternal; here is your god, the golden calf.

Then they rose up the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to revel. “To party wildly,” basically, is what it’s about.

Then the Eternal said to Moses, Go, get down; for your people... This is good, “your people.” **For your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt...** has to be a sense of humor in there surely, **For the people that you have brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves/acted perversely,** is how the word should be translated, “acted perversely.”

Verse 8—they have turned aside quickly. Didn’t take long. It’s happened so quickly. Incredible!

And so, we had Laodicea that went for a period of time, for several years after Herbert Armstrong’s death, ’86, ’87, ’88 a little rippling, but not enough, ’89, ’90, now things begin to heat up a little bit, little rumors here and there about, and people asking questions, “Is this what is being said,” because there was this double-speak that was being used.

People knew after a period of time, by the time we got up to '92, if someone asked a question, just by the question itself. It's like today, if a question comes into the president through - I'm trying to think of that woman's name now. I don't even want to use her name anyway. But when they have the news people come in and they're there asking questions and you know by the individuals asking the questions anyway, but you can tell by the question where they stand. You automatically know which side they're on. They know the people anyway, but oftentimes the question is put in such a way that you know where someone stands.

So, people out there knew by the question you would ask exactly where you stood so they'd give you a certain answer to put you off.

We see this period of time and it doesn't take long. You think of the time it takes. How long does it take for an Apostasy to occur after God's apostle dies? It really didn't take that long. 1986-1994. It's not that long in the scheme of things as far as God's Church is concerned, but a lot can happen, obviously, in that length of time.

They have turned aside quickly. Those with God's spirit, that should never, never, never, never ever happen, ever. If we can't hold fast to what God has given to us, what a horrible thing. When God has given us His holy spirit and the power day by day to remain close to Him and to hold on to the present truth, whatever He's given us to a moment in time, if that's all we have to that moment in time, that's what we hold on to with all of our being.

So it says, **They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them.** So again here, can't help but think of our time in the past here and how quickly people can turn away from the way that God commanded us to live, the truth He gave to us. Incredible!

They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshipped it, and sacrificed to it, saying, This is your God, O Israel. Mind-boggling! Well, we can look at this on a physical plane and say that's just crazy, how could anyone do such a thing? Far worse things have happened in our recent history within the Church, not going back far. You don't have to go back to the Apostasy. These things happen over and over and over again in time or have happened.

"This is your God, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt." It's just like in situations where people decide someone else is going to lead them, we're going to listen to someone else about what is true. You think about our history and people you've known who have done that. To start listening to someone else saying something different than what is being taught that we have learned, and if we've learned things that are true how could we turn from that?

I think of the various truths that have been given in a process of time here, of what we've gone through, truths about our having had an Apostasy, truths about the man of sin, truths about Laodicea, understanding those things, the stones of the temple, what happened to Laodicea, lukewarm. Those things were destined to happen because God said they would happen to human beings when they would go through such a thing. God knows what we're going to do as

far as the Church was concerned in those seven Church eras depending on what they had just because of human nature and time.

It doesn't take a lot of time even with God's spirit for individuals in time to become dissatisfied and turn to a different direction under various kinds of conditions. Incredible.

They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshipped it, and sacrificed saying, This is your God, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt. Then the Eternal said to Moses, I have seen this people, and indeed, it is a stiff-necked people. Hard of hearing. Can't hear. Won't listen. Hard-headed. Stiff-necked because they're going to do things their way, period. Incredible.

Numbers 11. So, the eighth one is in Numbers 11. So again here, we're up to number eight. Seven was rather long because of what they went through and so forth here. But Numbers 11 is an account that is stated in a rather passing manner. It just kind of mentioned in passing here as far as scripture is concerned.

Numbers 11:1. This again, sometimes these things are so poorly translated. It says here, **Now, when the people complained it displeased the Eternal.** A very poor translation, the words and what they mean here. Basically, it's saying, **The evil of the people complaining,** because this is what they'd been doing over and over and over again.

So, it's kind of a passing thing, but God is reflecting on it and He's looking at the way they are and what they just keep doing over and over again. He brought them up to Sinai, gave them the 10 Commandments, now look what they've done as far as this calf. These things just keep going. This is their nature. This is the way they are, they're a stiff-necked people. So, basically, God looks upon this and how they're living because as they keep doing this this begins to affect the rest of the people. The leaders are doing this, and if the leaders are doing this this begins to trickle out through the rest. That's just the way it's always been, even within God's Church.

In this particular case here, these rumblings that just kept going out through the camp of Israel, things that were taking place, how they were living, they were getting farther and farther away from anything to do with listening to Moses and what was being given as far as the law was concerned.

So, it says here, **The evil of the people complaining,** because this is what they were doing, and it was evil before God, **displeased the Eternal, and the Eternal heard it.** It was getting louder and louder as far as the people in the congregation was concerned. That's what it's saying here.

And His anger/displeasure was aroused. So, the fire of the Eternal burned among them and consumed them in the outskirts, it means "the extremities, the edges" of the camp. So, this is where it was taking place. It wasn't happening throughout the camp; it was on the extremities, on the outskirts of the camp.

When I think of something like this, a physical example of something, I think of how oftentimes sin can come into the Church and has in times past. It's on the extremities, the fringes, the farther out portion away from others who are doing what they should be doing. The farther you get out to the extremities with people, you know, no one is really paying too much attention to them and they're kind of doing whatever they want, and kind of hidden away, a little farther away from the main part. I hope that makes sense to you because that's what happens so often - on the fringes - and that's where things begin to go awry. And so, that's where God allowed these things to begin to happen.

Then the people cried out to Moses. So, we're talking about a fire that began to consume people going throughout these different areas on the outer parts of the camp in different places. **Then the people cried out to Moses, and when Moses prayed to the Eternal, the fire was quenched. So he called the name of the place Taberah,** meaning, literally, "It's burning," **because the fire of the Eternal had burned,** or consumed, as the word is, **among them.**

So again, it's kind of a passing thing but it's a time that God looks upon their rebellion and what's taking place because this is more akin to what's happening farther out within the camps with the people. This is what's going to be coming more toward the center where it's going to be heard more and more. Because this is where they choose to dwell, this is where they'd prefer to dwell, and so forth. Though they did have distinct areas there are those who chose to be farther out. Why? It's human nature.

Number nine. This is covered in the very next verse following the incident of the eighth account here. Numbers 11:4. So again, the ninth time it's recorded of their rebellion or their speaking out against God.

Numbers 11:4—Now, the mixed multitude that was among them had, it says, **"desires."** Some translate this as "fell into lusting," or "intensive craving." They try to look at what happened later on and say, well, they had this intense craving. They lusted greatly or strong craving, as it's referred to here. But it does reflect here, and what it's really about, is a very strong, if you will, or intense desire (or craving is fine), because we know what took place.

But again here, not in a right way. We have to understand this because of what it led to. Because it led to murmuring and complaining. You may have a strong craving if you're fasting for a day, but that doesn't mean that you start talking against God or having bad feelings toward God for giving us the Day of Atonement or whatever it might be. But in this case here, it's a matter of this length of time again and an attitude that was getting pretty rank. That's what comes out in the story.

Then the children of Israel also wept again. So, here they go again, crying, murmuring, complaining, regretting that they were in the location that Moses had taken them to and finding fault with it.

I think of people who are called into God's Church, and they have the greatest riches on earth. Thinking about that this morning and I think if only we could grasp how rich we are in the sense of everything God has given to us, more than the over... You can't even say overwhelming majority because it's beyond that! It's nearly all of mankind over 6,000 years.

Only a very few out of all the billions who have ever been alive have had the truth, have had God's spirit dwell in their mind, in their being. In the first 4,000 years there weren't even many that God had worked with in the sense of numbers, and when you think of the 144,000, most of those came later in the last 2,000 years through God's Church. That's not very many people through time.

So what is it? It's a failure to grasp what we have! If we understand that we're wealthy and rich, who leaves that behind on a spiritual plane? Who was willing to walk away from it? And yet it's happened over and over and over again because they don't like the way it's coming about. They don't like the way it has to be done. They want some other way. Like the Israelites did, they wanted a different way. "We want the promised land, but we want it a different way. We want to just go over there and it be there. We don't want to have war and battle and have to go fight for it!"

"I'm tired of seeing myself..." This is a common thing that's happened in God's Church in my history, in my thinking of people complaining and murmuring, "I'm tired of being told how bad I am." Okay. So, we're supposed to say how good we are? What will that do to the human mind? "We're so good. We're such good people." "We are such good people when we go to church." "We're such good people when we..." do this or do that. Because that's a protestant world, "We're good people. They're good people." Think, well, what is good comes from God and it comes from living God's way of life and obeying God.

But I can see, and I hope all of us can see, very fully so why number eight happened because it becomes overwhelming at times. It's like why, why does this have to happen? Why does it ever come to the fact that anyone would ever leave what we have been given?

That's why I think of PKG alone. We've always been small, but we've gone through hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people in the short time that we've been around. To me that's mind-boggling. And I think, what's wrong with that? Well, it's choices. Choices we have to make and the human mind and how we think. It reflects how difficult this is, that you have to really, really fight, and you have to be deeply convicted of what you're given that's true, and as God says, to keep it. To keep it, to be on guard with it, to be alert to it means you're going to hold on with all of your being.

That's why those two individuals up there should have had an instant choice and decision that they made. "We're following what Herbert Armstrong was given to give to the Church. There's no question about that. Why would you even ask that of me? Why did you feel like you had to tell us that?" That would be my response. That's what we should do. But that's not what happened because of the way we are as human beings.

So, if you want this you have to treasure it, you have to be thankful for it, and you have to fight for it with all of your being. You have to be deeply dedicated that this is it. I don't want anything else; this is it! How blessed are we to see the things we do? All the truth that we have, incredible, awesome.

As I say this in my mind are pictures of individuals starting with leadership because so much of the damage comes from that and then it works down into the Body and then people have to make choices and decisions because so-and-so said it, if so-and-so thinks that then, whew... Depending on where a person is at that point in time, if they're weak that's their own fault, but again, if we're weak at a particular moment at time and not fighting the fight like we should and not looking to God like we should, not repenting of sin like we should, we can be easy pickings.

Lots to learn from these things. We can look at physical examples of physical people, a physical nation and find fault with them and think, man, I just don't see how they could have been that block headed. Yet what we have done as far as God's people, overall, the vast majority I should say, of what has happened within the Church has done far, far worse.

What do you think the judgment is on such people? What do you think the judgment from God is when we take lightly the sacrifice of Christ that we're to observe every year, that we're to think about every time we repent, and take that lightly and go off on a tangent and do something different than what God has given to us? It's a horrible thing. Yet to too many it hasn't been horrible enough in their minds or they would never have done it. Choices, choices, choices.

Going on here in **verse 4—Then the children of Israel also wept again and said, Who will give us meat to eat?** This rumbling became so loud it really got to Moses this time. Number nine really got to Moses more than everything else had to this point in time. He was basically on the edge. I don't know how much hair he had, but he was on the edge of pulling every bit out.

We remember the fish, which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. So nice, so good being in captivity. So good being under Pharaoh's thumb. "It was so good having those that were out there beating us or whatever it took to get us to produce a certain amount for them. It was so much better there because we had the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks." You think sometimes, the human mind, it's like you've lost your mind when you get to that point, any sanity, any soundness, and people who begin to drift away have lost their mind. Any soundness, any sanity that's really sound as far as God's spirit, it's gone. You can't do that with God's spirit.

...the garlic. But now our whole being is dried up with nothing at all except this manna in our sight. "We're getting pretty tired of this. This is all we see. We don't see melons. We don't see cucumbers. We don't see leeks."

Now, the manna was like coriander seed, and it's color like the color of gum resin, a pale yellow. And the people went about and gathered it and ground it on millstones or beat it with a mortar. So, they had to do a little work. Hmmm. Just like you would with grain, you have to do some work to prepare it. ...cooked it in pans, and made cakes of it, etc. Its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil. Incredible what God gave to them. But it wasn't enough.

Verse 9—So when the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna descended upon it. Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of their tent. So, this has spread throughout the camp now. Can you imagine? Thousands and thousands. And you go for a walk, and this is what you hear, this complaining, this murmuring.

Today, what do people talk about? Covid, Covid, Covid, masks, masks, masks, shot, shot, shots, and what else? Biden, Biden, Biden. And quite a few other things. But it's pretty predictable and it's always because people are not satisfied. They're not happy, which some is understandable. Anyway, but here you're eating, you're not under pharaoh's thumb, you're not being beaten, you're not suffering like you were in Egypt.

But how soon we forget what it was like to live our lives out there and not having been called into God's Church, what it was like not knowing the truth, what it was like putting up a tree and putting up lights or whatever we might have done and having kids go out and get the eggs and begin to think that "You know, that was so much better back then." What happens to the mind when it gets to a point like that? Well, anyway, that's happened to a lot of people too. Mind-boggling.

"Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of their tent." Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Can you imagine? It's like TV today. At least we can turn it off. You can turn it on for a while, but you can't take too much, or you shouldn't take too much. It'll drive you crazy. So, you try to get news. It's like go to some other country and find it, somewhere. RT, China News, BBC, France 26, whatever it might be. But find it here?

Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of their tent. And the anger of the Eternal was greatly aroused. Moses also was displeased. So Moses said to the Eternal, Why have you afflicted your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all these people on me? Now, I can't imagine, because we're not talking about few hundreds, we're talking about multiple tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people.

Did I conceive these people? Now, this is getting pretty strong, pretty bold to say that to God Almighty. Did I beget them that You should say to me, Carry them in your bosom as a guardian carries a nursing child to the land which You swore to their fathers? Pretty strong, but he had a relationship with God by this point and God is merciful.

Verse 13—Where am I to get meat to give all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, Give us meat, that we may eat. I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. If You deal with me like this, please kill me here and now. And now, if I have found favor. And basically, If I have found favor. In other words, Kill me now if I have found favor in your sight.

What an incredible thing, “I would rather die.” That had to be pretty bad, pretty strong to feel that way. “And if I have found favor in Your sight, just do me in, end it.” **And do not let me see my wickedness.** So, knowing where this can lead and that kind of thing that can happen and not wanting to have wrong feelings toward God, it’s like it’s better to have this stop now where I am right now.

So sometimes we go through different things, but we have to be careful what we say toward God. So, we’re very, very blessed for what God has blessed us to see and what we have, and it is so awesome. But what an incredible thing here, ten things that took place like this one after another. Here, number nine.

So the Eternal said to Moses, Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be elders of the people and officers over them. Bring them to the tabernacle of meeting that they may stand there with you. So, now God is at a point where He’s going to give Moses help, more help in a more organized fashion, in that respect, because to this point in time Moses was carrying quite a lot.

Verse 17—Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the spirit, that is upon you, and will put the same upon them. In other words, “I’ve worked through you and now they’re going to come together and the spirit that is upon you is going to be spread out and be upon them, to work with them, to lead them, to help them in the administration of what is taking place here, of leading a people to the promised land.

“And the spirit that is upon you, I will put upon them.” In other words, the help to know how to work with, to lead, guide, and direct, to be able to have that help above and beyond because of the jobs and the responsibilities.

That’s an awesome thing to understand even within God’s Church God has given an order of things. He gives ability; when there is a job to be done there is more help that’s given for people to be able to perceive, to see certain things. I try to warn different ones at different times, and have throughout a long period of time within the Church, to be careful of that because you’re going to be able to see things and understand certain things about what people may be going through. There’s a learning process for you as well, but you have to be careful of that as well because there are things you’re going to perceive at times that don’t come from you. They come from God. If we’re relying on God, God will give help to fulfill those things. And so, sometimes it’s easy to see things that are leading in a bad direction and want to get involved in that or want to kind of head it off. That’s where oftentimes I have made the comment to individuals to back off.

So often you have to back away and let things go their course because there's a purpose in that as well. So, judgment has to be made concerning sin, and if there is something so bad, that's wrong, that's it's going to hurt others, but you can't try to protect everyone from making bad mistakes or experiencing something from bad choices. You have to be focused on what God says is a matter of sin that can hurt the Body. Then there may be a need to intervene, otherwise it's not wise to put our self in a position that we shouldn't put ourselves. Does that make sense?

So anyway, that's some guidance and direction given to the ministry and that's guidance and direction that should be given to God's people all the time as far as leaders and leadership is concerned. And here for those who were given help as well, they were literally going to be help, to see and understand things about how to work with Israel because of what Moses would say to them, that they would grasp it quickly, that they would be able to administer it quickly if they so choose. People don't always do that, but again, it's there.

This is an awesome thing, to understand how God works. He worked through Moses out through these individuals to work with a people. In God's Church it's always been different. It's a very structured system through the ministry. Always has been.

That's why if people grasp when they were murmuring and complaining about anything in times past and began to find fault with the direction and the choices and decisions Herbert Armstrong was making, to understand that they were doing so against God. Even in matters of make-up. Even in matters of something very physical, because it was a matter of having unity within the Church, that we all speak the same thing. Then if it changed, went back to saying, "No, it's not okay," which happened, so be it, because we want to have unity within the Church. This is God's servant, this is what he said, and hopefully we have learned whatever is bound on earth is bound in heaven. That's what that's about. Incredible!

There's much that God gives a leeway and a freedom to just for the very purpose of being able to have unity. God doesn't make every decision. He could tell us everything that has to be decided. He doesn't do it. He gives us principles to learn from. He gives us principles to go by and then we have to make choices and decisions. All of us do within God's Church. That's how we learn, that's how we grow. It's a process of learning to come into unity with the very mind of God Almighty—it truly is—to understand His judgments.

That's why God gave Moses judgments about working with the people of Israel. Because it reflects the mind of God in thinking about life and how we live amongst ourselves and what we do and what is the right thing to do and what is the wrong thing to do and learning where that comes from and why those decisions are made. Not a matter of just a right and a wrong but understanding the spirit of it.

So God gave His spirit to different individuals to grasp and understand those things, like the judgments, to see more about them than what people would within the rest of the congregation of Israel.

So then He said here, again, **I will take of the spirit, that is upon you, and will put it upon them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it alone or yourself alone.**

Then you shall say to the people, **Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat. For you have wept in the hearing of the Eternal, saying, Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt. Therefore, the Eternal will give you meat, and you shall eat. Awesome!**

But there's more to the story. **You shall eat not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days; but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you. Because you have despised the Eternal who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, Why did we ever come out of Egypt?**

Now, it doesn't go into and explain why that was going to happen and how that was going to happen, but that's what God said. So, we know that that's what eventually took place.

Going on, **verse 21—And Moses said, The people, whom I am among, are six hundred thousand men on foot.** Basically referring to those who were of, if you will, more of a military age and able to be a part of that, of a strength. **You have said, I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month. Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to provide enough for them? So, the question is being asked, how was this going to happen, how is this going to take place, what are we supposed to do? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to provide enough for them?**

It's like Moses saying, "What are we going to do? Where are we going to get all the fish? We can't kill all of our livestock that we brought out of Egypt. What are we going to do? Where is this meat going to come from?" **And the Eternal said to Moses, Has the Eternal's arm been shortened?** "Haven't you seen enough already to know that when I tell you there is going to be meat at a certain time that you're going to have meat? And this is how long it's going to last. Why worry? I'm here. It's going to happen the way I said." You think all the things that they've gone through and learned already.

Then I think of us, and I think of our journey, because we're on a journey out of spiritual Egypt to a promised land as well. Spiritually, some of the same kinds of things take place in our lives.

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Eternal, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. Then the Eternal came down in a cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and placed it upon the seventy elders. And it happened when the spirit rested upon them that they prophesied, although they never did so again.

So in other words, at that moment of time God poured out more power that they be able to experience something, that they be able to speak about things that they didn't grasp nor

understand in the same manner that was given to them to speak about concerning God, concerning things that God was doing and so forth.

But again, those things when it says “prophecy,” it’s not just about prophetic things in the future. It’s about God’s way of life, it’s about things that they could see and grasp and understand that they didn’t before. They were able to talk about God and their coming out of Egypt and purpose that was involved there and things that had been given to them on Mount Sinai and whatever else was there. These are the things they were talking about. These were the things they were excited about. These are the things they could see all of a sudden, the purpose and what was being done. It was an awesome experience.

So, they were able to talk in that manner about those things and then they were never able to do it again. Awesome. Incredible. Because it wasn’t God’s purpose that they be able to continue to have that. That was for later on, God’s Church. That kind of help, that kind of purpose had no purpose at that particular time in that respect. So, at least the individuals were there who were given help, going to be given help as far as a structure of something to help support Moses. That’s what this is about, matters of judgment and so forth.

But two men had remained in the camp, the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them. Now, they were among those listed, it goes on to say, but who had not gone out of the tabernacle. Yet they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp. So, Joshua the son of Nun and Moses assistant, one of his chosen men, answered and said, Moses, My lord, forbid them. Then Moses said to him, Are you jealous or zealous for my sake?

Now, you have to understand what was happening here. They were there and this is where they were, as a whole, to be doing this. It was amongst themselves that they could communicate. But to go out into the camp and do some of this was something, in essence, they’d taken upon themselves. And yet Moses is showing something here and he’s says, “Are you zealous for my sake? Is this why you don’t like the fact that the two have gone out there and have been saying the things that they are?”

O that the Eternal’s people were prophets, and that the Eternal would put His spirit upon them! So, Moses’ response was this is not something, in essence, though they did this and went out into the camp, at this point in time it wasn’t for the people to decide and judge, or when the other seventy here, if you will, right or wrong. Moses is making a comment in response here, “What an awesome thing if everyone in the camp were able to do this. What if everyone in the camp could see and speak to one another,” basically, “with such understanding?”

And Moses returned to the camp, both he and the elders of Israel. Now, a wind went out from the Eternal, and it brought quail from the sea and left them...

Just thinking about that as well. I think of the many times in times past where I've seen jealousy and envying within the ministry, within leadership, within elders, within deacons and deaconesses within the Church and someone thinking that someone else is able to do something or say something and that they shouldn't unless they go through them, type of thing. Anyway, jealousies amongst the ministry and with the ministry, and especially when it came to a hierarchy. These things existed. They were rampant in God's Church. The same thing here.

Isn't that what we should want for every individual in God's Church, for everyone to excel and do well, to be strong spiritually, to be strong in God's way of life, to be able to be a real example and a light to others and not become jealous of someone because someone is doing and living certain ways or doing certain things that are admirable, if you will, as far as a relationship with God within in the Church? So, they're a good example and so people see that, and they speak positively of it and highly of it and respect them? That's the way it should be amongst us no matter what.

To be jealous of it, what a hideous thing. But those things took place. So, our desire should be for one another, that everyone excel if we're able, if we yield ourselves to God. But that's up to each and every one of us to our doing that as well.

Now, a wind went out from the Eternal, and it brought quail from the sea, and left them fluttering by the camp about a day's journey on this side, and about a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the ground. They were all over the place. You asked for it, you got it. Quail, quail, quail. You have to go out and gather the manna, but now you have quail, they're everywhere all around the camp. Far distance in every direction you go, doesn't matter. Fluttering along the ground about two cubits high. I think, wow, incredible! I think two cubits is a little taller than me.

Anyway, they're all over. All you have to do is grab them. That's what they did. Thick, thick, thick.

Now, if you've ever been in a place, a chicken farm, and there are a lot of chickens, now, it has a smell to it because it's a chicken farm. The ammonia, it's pretty strong. I've said this before, but I have to say it again. I think about Bricket Wood when we were over there. There was a certain time in the spring when they'd take the manure spreaders—if you know what a manure spreader is—pull behind a tractor and it has this thing in the back that just moves the manure, chicken manure out the back and shoots it in the air. And so, you'd drive this tractor along, this thing's shooting it out in the air and on to the grass. And it's green grass. Oh, it's nice! But you can't take short cuts for several weeks, or for a few weeks, until it rains. So, you don't take short cuts and you don't open your windows at night because our dorms are right there beside the grass that just had the manure spreader go through it. So anyway, brings back real fond memories.

But the point is these quail, they're thick, they're all over the place. After a while the nostrils, the smell, the thinking about it? So, God let them have it. "You want quail, I'm going to give

you quail.” **And the people stayed up all that day—all that day—all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail.**

Now, why were they so greedy like this? Because that was greedy. God said this was going to go on for thirty days. “They’re not going to be here one day, two days, five days or twenty, but for a whole month. You don’t have to worry. You don’t have to go out here and just start bringing them all in that you can and hanging them all over the place. They’re going to be there tomorrow and the next day.”

They stayed up all day, and all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail. He who gathered least gathered ten homers. Now, I don’t know how much ten homers is but must be a good portion, and that’s the least so you know there are those that probably gathered twenty, thirty, forty, fifty. ...**and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.**

Now, I don’t know if any of you, probably not very many, have been in an area where a carcass has been hanging and drying and going through the process that it has to go through. Again, that added to the fact that there’s ammonia on the ground. I’ll just call it ammonia. The smell of this in the air as well? And what about all those carcasses? What about all those feathers? What about all the skin? What happened to all that? Well, it’s out there too, and knowing them they probably didn’t bury it all by any measure because where do you bury it? Here is a camp and you have thousands and thousands of birds, hundreds of thousands of birds, hundreds and hundreds of thousands of birds being cleaned, carcasses, things all over the camp. It’s kind of like the frogs in Egypt. It started to stink. It was pretty bad. Hot, hot, hot country!

And they spread themselves all around the camp. But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed... So, they didn’t waste any time. The indication is here they didn’t give much time for the fires to be prepared and everything else that needed to be done. They just gathered and gathered and gathered and were glad to have the meat; just yummy, yummy, yummy.

But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Eternal was aroused against the people, and the Eternal struck the people with a very great plague. It’s their spirit, their mind. They were a mess. Carnal. You talk about something that’s carnal, that’s pretty bad.

So he called the name of the place Kibroth-hattaavah. It means “Graves of the Craving.” **Because there they buried the people who had yielded** to this overwhelming desire for the meat and began to murmur and complain and didn’t have it like they had back in Egypt, so God allowed this plague to come through from whatever it was. Wouldn’t be too surprised if it wasn’t a matter of the meat after a while and being up for a while and what happens to things like that out in the open. And you think, what a wonderful place to promote the growth of flies and bugs and little things that, little worms all over the place too.

Because they're all over, the carcasses. They're all over where the piles of skin are and the feathers and the worms. I don't know if you've ever seen something similar to that ever in your life, but it gets to the point where they're actually moving. You can see a pile like that, a body like that actually moving because of what's in it. You don't want to pull it back because the stench is so bad. Thousands and thousands of worms, maggots. I've seen that many a time in my life growing up around a farm. It's not a pleasant sight. And you know what's worse? Not just the sight, again it's at a time which you kind of wish you had Covid. You don't have any smelling. That was a blessing to anyone if they didn't have smelling at that time.

So again, **Because** it says here, **they buried the people who had yielded to this. From Kibroth-hattaavah the people moved to Hazereth, and camped at Hazereth.**

So again, over and over and over again, this spirit, this attitude, this thinking of rebellion, constant, and it weighed heavy on Moses.

And you know, I think of how large the Church became, and up around past 90,000 baptized members before Herbert Armstrong died, and I am so thankful that God protected the Church from the knowledge of what was really happening in the leadership of the church. Because we didn't really know of all the things that were taking place until it came out later on.

I think back about what he had to have on his shoulders. He couldn't trust one evangelist. He did trust one whom he made an evangelist, that he'd brought in as the treasurer of the Church. But above and beyond that at that point, not a one, and if you can't do that how do you work with the rest of the ministry who are under that influence of those evangelists that you know of things that they have been doing that are wrong and things that you know they have done wrong, and you have that to work with in a Church that size?

That's what motivated him. That's why he came back stronger than ever '82, '83, '84, and '85 to the degree he could with the health he had at that particular point in time. So again, God's very merciful in how He works with us, how He worked with the Church at that time, because that was something that as a whole the Church wouldn't have been able to handle. We really couldn't have all at one time. A little here, a little there perhaps, but couldn't have dealt with that. Too much would have been lost as a result of knowing more.

It would be like what happened during the Apostasy, "If this is God's Church, how could such a thing happen in God's Church? The Sabbath? The Holy Days? Everything that we've ever been taught has been changed. So how could this happen in God's Church?" That's why one-third just went to the wayside and really didn't have any belief after that because they had already learned about Christmas and Easter and all these other things, so what do you have? There is nothing out there.

I can understand that to a point. Then another third who just went with all that new stuff in the first place.

It's always valuable. That's why God has us go back, that's why things are written in the Old Testament. We're to learn from the things that are there. We're to learn from the examples of things like this, of human nature, because that's our nature. If we were there, that's what we would have done because that's our nature. In that environment at that time that's what we would have done. Incredible! We're no different because we have the same human nature.

The task is once we come into God's Church and He gives us His holy spirit, that's to change. We're to start changing this selfish, selfish nature that's inside of us, this nature that God warns us about that resists Him, that is made to resist Him. "The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Because that's the way God created us. Carnal. Human. Awesome!

So, for those who got tired of hearing how bad they were? They took it personally because they thought they were better than that. "I'm not bad. My nature is not bad. I'm a better person than that. I'm not selfish." It shows a lack of conversion, shows a lack of prayer life, shows a lack of a relationship with God. That's what that shows. It reveals something about them that they never fully grasped.

Everyone in God's Church has to know their mind, has to come to understand how we think, has to be cautious and on guard against our human motives, and to understand we all have sin! Every one of us! There is no one in God's Church who doesn't have sin pop up in their life. It's the way we are. But we have the blessing of being able to fight against that, by the only power that can fight against it, God's spirit. Awesome, awesome, awesome to know those things.

That's a good place to stop. Thought we'd make it through all ten. Next week we'll go on to number ten.