

This is *Part 5 of The Rebuilding of Jerusalem*.

I hope that we're able to begin to grasp a little bit more about how that God has given the Church, especially at the end-time here, examples of things that are in the Old Testament, different stories of things we have read primarily as stories in times past, or tend to, anyway.

But there is so much that's directed toward this particular time, and that's because it's of such great importance to God, what He's doing in finishing the building of the 144,000, as far as the temple is concerned, and the age we live in, which is very unique to all humanity because it's a time of incredible technology that He began to give to mankind and the things that mankind is doing with it. This is a very unique period of time, in that respect, and obviously, all of it gearing in on the period of time that His Kingdom is going to be established.

So, there's a lot taking place, just as we experienced at the Feast this year, and this fits into a continual process of progressive revelation that God is giving, but it's speeded up a lot in the last few years. I'm excited, I'm inspired by being able to see some of these things that God is giving to us as examples that are really for us.

Now, there are things that people can learn from in every generation as far as the Church is concerned, but as far as something that's geared even more so to things concerning this end-time, some of these stories, this is what it's about.

Especially in this story here of what happened to Judah, they're being taken captive, though it's over an incredibly long process. Also, their returning is over an incredibly long process. But there are specific stories in there that just dovetail in perfectly with things on a spiritual plane that God is doing in the Church.

So, we're going to begin reviewing some of the verses we ended with last Sabbath and continue from there. The story of Nehemiah, again, begins by an account of how thirteen years after Ezra – I said had returned, or had been saying had returned, but that's having to do with the context of them returning into that region of the land though he had never been there. But he just went there, obviously. But it's about them still returning to reestablish Jerusalem and so forth. So, trying to make sure that's clarified a little bit as far as so no one gets tripped up in that thinking he'd already been there.

But this is thirteen years after Ezra had gone to Jerusalem that Artaxerxes agreed further here to let Nehemiah go to Jerusalem now to complete the rebuilding of the walls and the gates of the city. So, this is the last great phase of what is to take place. It is for us as well, if we understand what God has been doing.

So indeed, I think of things after the Apostasy, the rebuilding that had to begin taking place, some of the things that had to be done as far as truth, doctrine, and the like that was being attacked, and that having to do with the temple, of re-establishing the temple, rebuilding on the temple.

Those are incredible things that took place because it's going to prove to be one of the greatest events in 6,000 years that took place, one of the greatest of lessons ever to be learned, able to be learned by mankind, of what took place and why it happened, because it's on a spiritual plane. Everyone has to learn that, that with God's spirit you can still betray God. That with God's spirit you can still come to a point of not being born into the Family of God. A warning for all ages, in that respect.

So, after arriving then in Jerusalem, Nehemiah, first he got there, he sneaked out, in that respect, one night and inspected everything around the area concerning the walls and the gates that had been burned down and saw the condition that was there. And in that process, he didn't tell anyone about what he was doing. He hadn't told them why he was there yet. So, this is a part of the story. We'll pick up those verses again just to refresh our memory.

Nehemiah 2:13, he says, So, I went out by night by the Gate of the Valley, even before the Dragon Wall and to the Refuse Gate, and viewed (inspected) the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and the gates thereof that were consumed with fire. Then I went up to the Gate of the Fountain and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass through. So in the night I went up by the brook and viewed the wall, and then turned back and entered by the Gate of the Valley as I returned.

So again here, a quick synopsis here of what he'd done. He just went out and wanted to see it himself, to see how much damage there was, see what needed to be done, and have this more, in that respect, more firmly embedded in his mind about what God had given to him as a task, what had to be done and the extent of the work that needed to be done. It was a very sobering thing for him, what he saw.

From time to time in God's Church, these things have happened. They don't happen all at once. Just like with Nehemiah here or just like with Ezra, there were things that happened to them at different stages. They didn't just go in and build the temple all at once and it was all taken care of. They had battles along the way. During the time of Nehemiah, they had battles and they had things to deal with, even in the finishing of the walls and the gates and so forth, and the spiritual lessons that can be learned from that.

So, it says here in **verse 16—So, the rulers did not know where I went or what I did, and neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor the priests, nor the nobles, nor the rulers, nor the rest who did the work.** He just arrived; there were those who were with him from the king, if you will, Artaxerxes, that he had sent along as protection and as authority as well that was with him, in that respect, to back that up to a point.

He said, **Then I said to them, You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem is a waste, and the gates of it are burned with fire.** I think of the entire period of time that we've gone through since the Apostasy, and we've had incredible battles and struggles. There's always been a lot of waste as well along the way. There have always been things that weren't where they should be.

Now, that for us is on a personal plane. That for us is individually. That's what becomes unique about building the walls, about building up the gates, and so forth, because it comes down to lessons for us to learn and understand that we're a part. We're a part of the temple and we're a part of the construction of the walls as well, the fortification. What we do and how we do it depends upon how strong those things are in large part. And sadly, we have seen in the Church and what's taken place since we began, especially after we were reorganized, or organized as a remnant Church. For some time thought we Laodicea was still going on. Then God revealed no, Laodicea came to an end after that first 3½ years, and then He had reestablished the Church. Unique. A remnant Church, a remnant group that was to continue forward.

These are profound things in the end-time because of how important this is to God's work. He wants us to understand that, the important part, the important portion that we have in it. To understand it for what it is or strive to understand it for what it is.

You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem is waste and the gates of it burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem and put an end to the reproach. So, this is a part of what we do. We continue to move forward, and we look forward to the time that in essence, people are going to learn, indeed, what God was doing. Because they can't know that yet, they don't know that yet. I think of the scattered Body and all the things that people have said and done, and all the attacks that have taken place within but primarily without, but even within.

Then I told of the hand of my God which was good upon me, and also the king's words that he had spoken to me. So, even on a spiritual plane God gives us this from time to time in greater portion, helps us to understand what God is doing. This is where His hand is. This is where His work is. This is what He's doing, and this is something we need to grasp.

So, he told them this in a physical sort of way, of how God had blessed him, and God's hand was upon him to come there and finish these things, get these things done, and it was, and it gave them encouragement and strength. But we are to learn this ourselves from time to time in sense of being inspired and moved and motivated by God's spirit, of how important we are to God and what God is doing.

We have every favor and blessing of God to complete what He's given to us. We have to be told that from time to time, reminded of that from time to time just as they were from time to time, just as Zerubbabel had to be reminded of that at one time when Ezra had to come down. So, Zerubbabel himself had to be reminded in the sense of what was taking place.

And basically, he came down, Ezra did, and gave them a message from God to get back to work, to quit focusing on things in the world and what you're doing in the world and building up your own homes and your own life and getting focused on things away from the focus you should have, why you came here in the first place. It's to build Jerusalem. It's to build up the temple. It's to build up the city. It's to build up the walls. It's to build up the fortification of this place once again. Awesome!

We're doing it on a spiritual plane, and we think because it's so small sometimes that it's not that important. That's where we miss the boat. That's where we miss an understanding how important it is to God what's taking place.

Nehemiah 2:19. Well, I didn't finish that verse. He said, **...told them that the hand of my God was good upon me, and also the king's words that he had spoken to me. Then they said, Let us rise up and build. And they were strengthened, in essence, to put their hands toward the good work.**

Verse 19—When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian heard it, they derided and despised us, and said, What is this thing that you are doing? Now, this is a very common thing. It happens all the time in a sense of a physical carnal world, but it's happened around the environment of the Church as well. That with those who went off in different directions and did the things they did and then hearing about this Body, being in the beginning more of a thorn in their flesh, and after a time can more fully justify the things they do. But it has to be done in attacks and things have to be done in hatred, and things have to be done in anger and bitterness.

I think of the elections that are going on right now, some of the kinds of things that are taking place. People go beyond being angry, they become hateful, just downright hateful. That's just carnal, human nature. When something else is a threat to them that's just the reaction, and it happens. It happens in the Church as well as it has in times past and things that have gone on out here.

It says, **Will you rebel against the king?** Well, he already had been given the right and the authority by the king to do what he was doing, to go down there and build, and had letters and so forth for the timber and everything else that was needed there to finish what they were doing, to put the finishing touches on it in the sense to protect it, to make it stronger, to fully establish it. Because just building the temple and rebuilding it wasn't enough. They needed a lot more to protect what they had rebuilt.

I think of various things that have happened in times past, different mocking, things that people have said, things that different ministers have said out there in order to mock and deride and to belittle because they don't understand, and we understand that. But sometimes it's not pleasant to go through because some of these channels come through different ones in families that are out there, that have families, or had had families more so. We don't have that

as much anymore, but there are still some of that that exist. Some of the things then that come toward us.

Those are all there in a positive way for us to grow by, they truly are. But to see them for what they are sometimes, to understand they can't grasp it, but to understand there's a spirit there and what people try to find, the fault or whatever it might be. It's like, "Look how far they're moving from God." It's kind of what they said here, "Will you rebel against the king?"

So, all they see, in that respect, the farther we've gone along, is a rebellion against God and the word of God. Can you imagine (because it happened), different times that have taken place, like 2005, "Look what they're saying now? Look what they're doing now. There's only one? They don't recognize Joshua..." and see, they call him "Jesus." Which I'm thankful of that one there too, awesome blessing there just having that name corrected. "...but disregarding him as having eternally existed?"

These are things where, again, people don't understand, and they don't know. Just as here, these individuals didn't know, they didn't grasp and didn't understand why they were in the attitudes because they didn't see a bigger scope of what God was doing. Anyway, there are those parallels here that are wise for us to try to understand.

Then how about when we did come down to Joshua? It's just getting farther and farther and farther, becoming a greater and greater gulf. Women serving in the Church, women in the ministry. It gets to a point where a lot of them just hee-hawed. That's the way their minds were. "Look how far they've gone!" It's like, "The more we can do that, the more we can put this farther away from us and be convinced that what we're doing is right." Because it has to be justified.

Moving farther and farther away from the truth. That's all they're doing. We've just drawn closer and closer and closer to what is true, truer and truer what God has given to us. We've been exceedingly blessed.

Verse 20. Now, before reading what we should grasp as God answers such people because this is an answer then that God gives to them concerning this, and especially ministers who have refused the obvious truth. Just like the Apostasy, to continue to refuse something that should be so obvious? Really, even on a physical plane that's almost hard to comprehend.

After seeing everything divided up like it was, after seeing things scattered like they were, then trying to latch on to something and saying, "We've got to finish the work," not understanding God had given to Herbert Armstrong to finish what was needed to finish in the sense of preaching the gospel into all the world. That's why different ones have TV programs and magazines that continue on. Because the belief is that Herbert Armstrong didn't finish the work that God gave to him to do, that he didn't finish Matthew 24:14. But he did.

Not to grasp and understand an apostasy, a man of sin, a son of perdition, all those things that should be obvious.

So, here is the next verse, the answer, **verse 20—Then I answered them, and said to them, The God of heaven, He will make us to prosper.** That's what God does. He's continued to prosper us, to bless us, and continues to give us more and more truth. So, this has been an answer for a long, long time, from *News Watch*, from the time of *Time is Running Out to Time Has Run Out*, to the first book being published, to all the things that have taken place and how scattered Churches and different ones out there have responded.

Therefore, His servants will rise up and build, in other words, continue to prosper as we build on what God has given to us. That's what's taking place.

Therefore, His servants will rise up and build, but you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem. It's pretty strong. That's why I think of sermons that have been given through time here and have gotten stronger as time went along, specifically talking about more of a division that's taking place and what's going to happen to different ones because of the choices they've made, and that God has the power, not only within the Church but outside as well, as to what happens to people, as to who has opportunity to continue on into a new age.

There was a period of time around 2008 and even after, where I know that we had a great desire and believed at that point in time, because of what was given to the Church up to that time, that we'd see many people coming in out of, eventually, out of the scattered Church. No, not God's purpose. He let us go through things to learn, no.

See, it all comes down to things of learning about God's judgment and why things have continued on, why and what we're to learn from those things. We learn. All we have to do is look back and God helps us to put things in better focus, if you will, by looking back and knowing what's upfront. The more we see that the clearer we can see ahead.

It's very much like the puzzle that Herbert Armstrong talked about that just becomes clearer and clearer. God has worked with us in large part by going through different things to learn what we need to learn. We went through an apostasy; we learned different things along the way.

But we didn't learn it all at once. Why? Because you have to live certain pieces of it first and become so convicted of that. Then God can show you something else to be added to it that makes it even clearer. Something so simple like being spewed out of God's mouth, being scattered, of understanding why, understanding what it says of the stones of the temple.

But those things didn't come all at one time. They came in different segments because God blessed us then to live through one experience, to learn from that, and then to come across other scripture when it was His time and that became clearer.

The parable of the 10 virgins. Wow. Awesome! But we wouldn't have known those things if we hadn't had the experience. Now, God could give us the knowledge of it, but something that's exciting to me about God's way of life is that He doesn't just pump out knowledge. It's not about just giving, being given knowledge, and all of a sudden we have this knowledge; it's what

we live and experience. Then we're able to grow in understanding - and then wisdom because we're able to understand why God has done some of the things the way He has and to learn from that process, of how He's working and why He's working that way. We really come to a greater understanding about God.

And to me, those are some of the greatest of things to learn, to know and understand the mind of God. Because it has to do with judgment over and over again. There are some things that sometimes people do that though—how do I say this—though they're able to continue on to certain aspects and certain things in their life they're not forgotten by God. They may be able to continue on with the form of something they had, but not have His help in it. That's what's taken place out there in a great way.

But there are just a lot of people out there, especially ministers, who aren't going to be given one iota of a portion in what takes place in a new age. I've talked about that in times past. This is why. Because there are some things that have to be learned in another way, and for many, it's going to be in another resurrection, or in a resurrection, if you will. In other words, not the 144,000 but the one later on after the thousand years. Then to be resurrected in a life like that is how they're going to be able to finally learn.

And that's tough. But what a blessing if you can learn it and repent and then have opportunity in God's Family. That's why there is going to be a lot of weeping and gnashing of teeth. That's why if you have opportunity now you need to treasure it and understand, try to understand what you've been given. Because what we have is far more than what your mind can grasp. It takes God's spirit to grasp it more fully, it truly does. The more you ask God for help to grasp it, to understand it, to love it, He'll help you in that process.

That's why it says here, **Therefore, we His servants will rise up and build.** That's really all PKG has been about because God's blessed us in that as the previous verse talks about. **...but you have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem.** This is about God's government. This is about the 144,000. Not only that but so many of them aren't even going to have any right or portion with what others have here in the sense of living on into a new age, physical human beings, but in the Church.

There are some who are just not going to be given that opportunity because that wouldn't be good for them. Others, depending on God's purpose and the lessons and things to be learned, there will be those who will be granted repentance. But God has to grant it and offer it.

That's why I think of some who, if you look out over the temple from time to time, over Jerusalem from time to time, and you see there is still refuse, there is still debris, there are still things that aren't being cleaned up, there are things not being built. That's an individual thing because we have to be doing the building in our own lives individually, and if we're not building and being strengthened then we're part of the debris. And what happens to it? The majority of it has gone by the wayside and it's stayed as debris, became worse. Well, that's a horrible thing.

So indeed, I think of some of these things, especially with the leadership and the ministry, because those things are not small things. They're far greater than what most comprehend, of what happened out here in the scattered Churches.

So indeed, that's why the "THRO," *Time Has Run Out*, was written. That was the primary thrust of it. It was as, if you will, a message to them. God gave that a long time ago, and we'll come back to some of that if we have time, maybe go through some of that to point some of those things out.

But what we've gone through has not been small. What Judah went through was not small. Excruciating over a long, long period of time. Being taken captive was excruciating. Coming back was excruciating. It was hard. It was not easy, and as they came back in different portions there not all even came back, obviously. So many more stayed away or continued on where they were building homes and the like. Others had this desire to go back. Who were they? They were the ones stirred up by God's spirit.

Nehemiah 3:1—Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built the Sheep Gate, and then consecrated it and hung its doors. So, here they are, and it's not done all at once. It's a little bit here and a little bit there until it's finished, until it's done. They built as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of Hananel. Next, the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built. Also, the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. So all these gates they're working on first and foremost, getting those things done because what's the sense of building everything else up if that's not taken care of, because then you're still so vulnerable. So, again, they were pointed to the things that were the most important in order to have the greater strength that was needed to protect Jerusalem, to protect the city, to protect the temple.

Now, the rest of the chapter, all the way from verse 3 on down through 32, to the end of it there, lists different ones and what they did, what they were building on, what they were working on, and building up the defenses, greater defenses, growing in strength, in that respect. A lot of work went into it individually.

That's us in the Church. It's what we put into it. We're blessed according to that, what we put into it. Our desire to have the heart of David, our desire to be dedicated to God, our desire to put God first, in all those things that work together in our lives that if we're stirred up by that we keep plodding forward, we keep moving forward, and we keep fighting. God blesses us in that process.

But those who don't, well, we know that story as well, what takes place and what happens. Not going to have a part even within the Body.

We come down to chapter 4. **Nehemiah 4:1—Now, when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, that he was furious and very indignant...** It's like the more they see certain

things being done at times when they think they've destroyed something or they've stopped it or they have this confidence that nothing is going to be able to be accomplished, then when they see something being done it just irritates the tar out of them. They hate to see progress.

I think of the political system right now. People hate to see it when certain ones perhaps had success over a period of time doing various things and others come along. Anyway, we know the story. It's not a pretty sight. But sometimes it just causes people to be downright ugly, nasty, mean, hateful, stirring up that attitude in other people as well, society.

It says, **they were very furious and indignant and derided or mocked the Jews.** So, when they see certain things being done, there is something that God does when individuals continue to reject things, that some things they really can't deny fully inside. They're eaten up by it, so they have to justify certain things themselves, in themselves. That's a horrible, horrible thing to take place.

It's a horrible thing when this happens in the Church, in the Body, because somehow individuals who start doing various things, moving away, they have to justify somehow what they're doing. They have this battle inside and it eats away. It just eats away.

That's what happened out there as well in a scattered Body. Some things with some, it just eats away. Some couldn't care less; they're so far gone. Others it still eats away because they want to see absolute failure and collapse. What a horrible thing, but that's the way it is.

Then he spoke before his brethren, the army of Samaria, and said, What are these languishing Jews doing? In other words, "These weak, withering, deteriorating, failing," all the words that this means in Hebrew, that's how they were looked upon. "They're just dying out, so what is it they think they're doing now?" It's really looking down in an incredible way upon them.

That's what these leaders were doing. They were looking down upon what the Jews were doing there, not understanding God was blessing them and it was going to become stronger and stronger and stronger in something that really in normal terms would have been impossible to accomplish. That's why they had this kind of cocky confidence. Because they were larger, they had more people, they had an ability to go in and attack and they were working on that.

Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? "Are they really serving God?" "Do they really think they're serving God?" There's a mockery that has to be involved there. **Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish, and that which is burned?**

Now, Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, Whatever they build if even a fox goes on it, he will break down the stone wall. So, anyway, there is this kind of comradery. It shows a perversion of thinking sometimes that people can deride and mock and make fun of so much that then they try to, some come up with supposed jokes that you can laugh at.

Now, maybe you haven't experienced some of those things, but I have over and over and over again over the entire time period. Not as much in times recent here because they're far more removed now. But it still exists. But for so, so long. Incredible.

Verse 4—Hear, O our God, for we are despised. It's just the way of life. We all have to get used to that, and we have. You get to a point where you realize they can't help what they're doing. It's like what Christ said, "They can't help what they're doing. They don't know what they're doing." And so, it's not easy sometimes being on the receiving end of all that that's coming at you because it has to do with friendships and relationships and betrayal and all the other things that go along with it that can not be so easy to take sometimes.

Turn their reproach on their own heads and give them as plunder (as a prey) to a land of captivity!

Now, this is done in a very physical way in their thinking, wanting them to meet their end so that they wouldn't be a threat anymore. That's seen in the physical way. We don't respond that way because there are things that God has shown us that we're not to think that way or be of that kind of a mindset, but knowing as well within in the judgment of God it still exists, that there are things they're going to go through and they're going to suffer because why? Because it's the only way in time that they're going to have a chance to learn.

They've got to suffer a lot now and a lot more later before they can begin to see. In other words, to be humbled. Because that's what every human being has to come to. Every one of us has to be of a humble mind for God to work with us. And if we're not willing to be of that kind of a mindset?

That's why what a horrible thing to think that as soon as this country experiences what it does and all those out there know what has been said, and so many of them do, that they're not going to repent. They can't accept this Body as being God's Church. They can't accept the things that you have been given, that Joshua is the Christ, that women are to have rule within the Church as well. Not just be ordained but have rule within the Church as well. Those kinds of things because they so look down upon that and have such a haughtiness about it they can't be worked with in this age. So, they have to experience some very harsh things in order to be able to come to repentance. But that's a matter of God's doing and God's judgment on their part. But we have to understand that and understand why that's what's best for them.

What's the best thing that can happen? That one day they come to repentance. And what is it going to take to bring that? That's what's sad about humanity, about mankind, about the end of this age. That's why so much of this world has to suffer to the degree it does because people don't want God to rule in their life. People don't want one Church. They don't want one government. They don't want Christ and the government to come that would take away their governments and their way of governing and their power. Can you imagine carnal human minds? But they don't want it because they don't understand it.

Turn their reproach on their own heads and give them a plunder (a prey) to a land of captivity. Do not cover their iniquity. And God doesn't. God remembers. He remembers those in the Church, in the Body who have not been doing what they should do. They're given, people are given time and an opportunity, just as some are right now to make some changes in their life, and if they don't respond to the degree they need to God will judge that. We're all, especially in the Church, under judgment in the Body.

...and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You. So, if there is not repentance that is the case, that is the way it is. Don't have to pray about it, it's just the way it is, that if we don't repent of sin the sin can't be blotted out, it can't be forgotten. God does not forget because His desire is out of love. Whatever it takes to bring them to repentance.

Isn't that an amazing thing, to understand sometimes what we have to go through as human beings because we're so hard-headed? It's like whatever it takes, take me through it, I want to be through it. Whatever trial, whatever hardship, so be it, because nothing is greater than what God is offering us. Incredible.

Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before you for provoking the builders. That's what it's saying here. For being an annoyance, an irritation, stirring things up against the builders. If you understand who you are you're a part of the builders. There are things you have to do in your own life. Some have had other family members who were a part of the Church, and some are bombarded by that, or other members who were not a part of the Church but still bombard you. It's the same sort of thing. But you've got to stand. That's the way it is.

Again, we're all part of the building. We're all part of the builders because there is work we have to do.

So we built the wall. That's what God has done within the Church. He's blessed us to help build the wall. We've all had to be a part of it. I hope you understand that on a spiritual plane, what this means.

So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to the half thereof, for the people had a mind to work. What an awesome thing. To me, that's one of the most encouraging things within the Church, is to see when God's spirit is working in people and to see their response to God's spirit in other words, to respond to God's spirit.

That's why I think 2005 was a big time for me as far as a minister in God's Church and understanding of something of such magnitude to be given to the Church that I knew it had to be like what happened when God gave Herbert Armstrong the understanding about Pentecost, that it wasn't on a Monday, it was on a Sunday. Those with God's spirit who embraced that, who were living what was right could see it and they would embrace it. I knew that would be the case there, that those who could see it, they would embrace it because of God's spirit.

That's an exciting thing when you see God's spirit working in people's lives. That's what we need to have a focus of in seeing one another. Because we all have our little weaknesses, and sometimes our big weaknesses. We have our ways of rubbing people in the wrong way. I do. We all do. There are things, little things that maybe get under our skin from time to time because we're different because we're carnal.

We have a carnal mind. We're carnal human beings. But we're to learn about God's fellowship. We're to learn about things about what builds a right fellowship, and you have to work at it, and there are certain things you can't have in your mind, so you ask God for help to get rid of them, to fight against them.

I have to do that. We all have to do that if we're doing what's right in asking God, "Please help us to love, help me to love everyone in the Body with a right heart, with a right mind, not thinking any ill or wrong toward anyone." That's a tall order if you really see it on a spiritual plane because we're really different from one another in many cases throughout the Body.

That's one thing I love about the Church. We're all so different. Now, some here and there might be more alike in certain areas as far as different proclivities and the like, and sometimes people tend to gravitate toward one another in some of those things, but within the Body, we have so many differences. And I love it. So I think, "Viva la difference!" Because that's what makes life.

If we were all the same it'd be hideous, especially the carnal world. But within self, we have our proclivities on a human scale that aren't good, weaknesses, little bugging things here and there, and that's just life. How we deal with that, how we work with that, every family has those things in the world. We're not the same. None of us are the same.

And so, we judge, and we think in different ways, and we tend to, naturally, judge one another. Those are the things God shows us that we're to battle. Those are tall orders because it takes His spirit to battle those things successfully. That's why we have so many sermons along those lines.

We all have to work and ask God for help to love each other, to have a right mind toward each other, to have right thinking toward one another, and we can't do that on our own. No one can. You have to have God's help and God's spirit.

It says, "We built the wall." That's what we have to see. Each one of us has to see we're not only a part of a building, we have to do the building. Now, God's doing the building, He's giving the offer for it to fit into different places. We don't know what those are, but we have to be actively involved actually doing the work, work as well. That's why Christ says, "I work and My Father works." When we're called, God the Father works, Christ works, and we better be working.

You can't lollygag around. If you want to come through this, you want to live this way of life, you're going to have to fight for it. Not only work, you have to literally fight for it. Awesome. Beautiful.

Verse 7—Then it happened that when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and that the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry. They just got hotter and hotter, more angry as time went along, more frustrated as time went along because they were seeing something they didn't like.

...and all of them considered together to go and attack Jerusalem and create confusion. So, they wanted to be a part of literally attacking it and creating greater confusion in order to stop it, in order to bring it to an end.

Now, for us ever more so the importance of building and doing the part of doing the building is to understand the primary instigator in all of this. It's a being that's very powerful, and He knows every one of us. He knows your weaknesses. He knows your faults. There are times he gets stirred up. The more stirred up he gets about various things sometimes God allows him to go out and to see what's there. Why? Because it tries us. What are we going to do? How are we going to respond under certain attacks? Is God first or is he going to be able to come in and weaken us?

Now, everyone who's ever left this Body, he's the one that's attacked very powerfully so on a spirit plane to pull them farther away. They made the choice of responding because that's the way they were thinking. He just stirred it up more and brought it along.

Not a one of us on our own power has any ability against that being. Not a one of us. That's why we have to stay close to God. That's why we cry out to God to dwell in us every day. That's why we have to ask God for help to conquer and overcome sin and be forgiven of sin so that He will continue, and His Son, to dwell in us so that we're able to dwell in them. Because that's our defense in every way. That's our strength in every way, "Because greater is He that's in us than He that's in the world," see. Can't afford to forget such things.

Nehemiah 4:9—Nevertheless, we made our prayer to God. That's what you do. Something, someone comes at you, you hear a certain thing that's happening, that's not right, and you pray to God for help. What? To make us stronger. To make others stronger. To help us to be one.

Nevertheless, we made our prayer to God, and because of them, we set a watch... So, you don't just pray to God, and all of a sudden that's it, you just walk away from it. You have to do work. To set a watch, to be watchful on a spiritual plane you can't sit on your hands. There's something you've got to do. You've got to pray. There are times you fast. You got to cry out to God. Go over these things with God. Share them with God. That's what He wants because in that we're being molded. It's a spiritual thing.

...set a watch against them day and night. So, this isn't easy to do, set a watch day and night. It tells some of this as we go on here, what that involved.

Then Judah said, The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much debris so that we're not able to build the wall. Well, that just comes from wrong thinking. Sometimes if we're not careful we'll succumb to that, we'll come to a point where we'll find fault or we'll see something.

I think of our size sometimes. I think sometimes if people aren't careful they look at a size and they judge by that. Because we did that in Worldwide in ways that should never have been done. Ministers taught that in Worldwide in ways it should never be done. It all had to do with a matter of counting and having jealousies between ministers in different areas, and where were the borders? Because if somebody was right on the border, who gets them? Because that's your count. The more count you have then the better minister you must be if you're over that area.

I could tell you story after story after story. Well, you probably wouldn't be shocked by now, but they're dumbfounding that they even happened.

Someone got in trouble for not counting right in the bathrooms one time, people who weren't there. Well, they must be in the bathroom. It was twenty-five people, or something like that. Two stalls in the bathroom and so the minister basically said there are eighteen people that weren't in the count so they must have been in the bathroom. Yep, sure. The bathroom gets that crowded, I'm on my way out long before that.

So, that's how important a count was. I don't even want to go into some of that, how goofy it got. But this is the kind of thing we're talking about here, that it's so easy to have shortcomings, to let down, to find fault, not to understand it's not about the size. It's about God. It's about yielding to God and understanding His plan in the midst of all that and why He has designed it to be exactly that way and to have confidence that this is what it is.

We should have that confidence by what? I hope you understand what it is that you should have great confidence in. It's by all the truths that God has given to you. There is your strength and confidence in many ways because it's from God. It's God's truth. It's God's word. It's things that God has shared with us, that He's given to us that He didn't give at any other time in the Church. These are all new ever since the Apostasy. Because that was new. The first and the last of that type in the Church. Incredible. On and on it went. That's why it's so important to focus upon those things from time to time.

That's why when I went off for three years that I'd asked some people to be sure that you tell this to the Church, the truths. Remind them of the truths. Because that's how important they are to us, and if we don't have those constantly before us... Oh, am I getting ahead on the November meeting. I better slow down. It's amazing how all these things flow together for a purpose because God's doing the building and the molding and the fashioning in where we're going and where we're at.

So again, to have a negative mindset, to find fault in something, to begin stirring up something, doubt, and say something in the Church that may cause doubt in someone else's mind, which happened during the Feast in one instance that it irritates the tar out of me. Something was said and it bothered someone else. And candidly, that happened more than once. You think, we need to guard.

You know, being watchful and being on guard sometimes isn't just a matter of crying out to God and looking to Him for His spirit and help, but it's making sure that we know what we're supposed to be guarding. Sometimes it's this tongue because it's what's in the mind and it tends to come out of the mouth so often.

If we're disgruntled about something and we don't feel good about something and we're over here in a corner moping? Which I saw at the Feast as well. You think, "Why are you over there moping? Why do you have such a look on your face? Why do you look so downtrodden?"

You have nothing to be downtrodden and moping about. You should be excited. You should be up here visiting instead of waiting for someone to come up and visit with you. Where is your work? You going to find fault with others because they're not treating you right or treating you well? Is that what you expect?"

That's what I used to hate about certain things within the Church when some would say, "The Church just doesn't have the love that it used to have in it." Every time you can say, "Well, where is yours and what are you doing to show your love to others? Who is it you have invited over recently? Who is it you've gone out to eat with? Who is it that you have had certain fellowship with? How many?" What are you doing? We've got to be careful. We've got to be on guard.

Sometimes being on guard, some of the greatest guards we have to be on guard about is what is up in the mind and what might slip out of the mouth? We have to ever be on guard, don't we, and be reminded of these things. They might seem small but they're not small because they can destroy a person. Enough said.

Verse 11—So our adversaries said, They will neither know nor see anything until we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease. So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times... Now, I don't know what this means, their expression because I'm sure they didn't just count the times. Maybe they did. But maybe it's like an expression. It's like, "They came to us so many times. They came to us ten times!" I don't know. From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us.

Now, sometimes those who will be faithful will expose wrong speech and wrong actions of others. See, it doesn't always have to be on the outside, because for us it really isn't. Because that shouldn't be a bother to us, in that respect, in the same way as it is if it happens inside the Church.

That's why it's so important. That's why I have to be kept abreast as God's minister, of the Church on earth, to be told by different ministers out here when things happen in an area. Because by hearing of various things that happen I may hear something from one area or from another person over here and then I have two or three witnesses whereby it helps me through God's spirit to be able to have a clearer picture of what's going on. But if some don't come and tell me various things that are going on out there how am I supposed to know what's happening in God's Church in order to take care of it?

Kind of getting off into the November meeting again. I'll just vent those things right now and get them out there.

So, we have to do that for one another in different areas, in Church areas, and so forth, because that's how things generally happen. If you know that something is being done wrong you have a responsibility to love your brother, to do something. What's the first thing you have to do? Go to them alone. These things are so simple. Rarely done. Sometimes even to this day. And you think, after all this time and after all that's been said?

Therefore, I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, spears, and bows. So, they had to do something. They had to be ready for battle. God does that for us. He reminds us from time to time the importance of that, of having your armor, of being prepared for anything that comes along, of being close to Him, of being strengthened in His spirit.

Then I looked, arose, and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them. So again, so much could be said there. It's how we think. This is about how we think as to what we will act upon for the sake of what is good for the Body, for the Church, because God is first. We have to have our priorities right.

To do otherwise, that's why people sometimes don't go to their brother alone. Because they're afraid. Afraid of what? Oh, afraid of them maybe taking it the wrong way or afraid of whatever it might be, maybe lose a friendship there. I've known of so many people who thought they'd maybe lose a friendship, and they didn't want to do that, and you think, if you let it go you're going to lose them, period. That's what's happened over and over and over again sometimes in God's Church. Not sometimes, but a lot.

Remember the LORD, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren. God has to be first. He has to be at the forefront of our minds, that we do everything we do because we're seeking to do what's right. And this is a battle. This isn't easy. What they were doing wasn't easy. What we're doing is not easy. Sometimes it's a battle up in the mind.

"And fight for your brethren." That's what this is about. We have to fight for one another. By doing what's right, you're fighting for the Church, you're fighting for your brethren, to protect them. Sometimes to protect them from something that's being said that's wrong, something

that's in disagreement with what the Church is teaching. Because we should be in total unity and oneness. ...**your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.**

So it happened that when our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had brought their plot to nothing... It's not that they recognized that it was God doing this, but they saw that they had favor, they could see outwardly some of the things that had taken place, in that respect, and that they weren't going to be able to do what they'd planned on doing now, because now they were prepared and they're ready and they've become aware of what's going on and they're fully prepared.

What an awesome thing for that to be said, that Satan comes up and there's nothing he can do. Because he knows what God has done as individuals have heard and listened and responded and been on guard. Awesome!

...had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. It doesn't end. See, this went on for a while, and finally, they had it built. But it doesn't end. We keep working at whatever God gives us to make it stronger, to reinforce it more and more and more.

So it was, from that time on, that half my servants worked at construction, while the other half held their spears, their shields, and the bows, and armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded by his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was nearby.

Anyway, what an awesome thing here that this is how they were to be, constantly ready. They were in battle, and this is our life. There is not a time we can let down and not be on guard. This is a part of being on guard, having on the armor that we're supposed to have.

Then I said to the nobles, and the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and extensive, and we are separated from one another on the wall. Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to them there. Our God will fight for us. So again, this is something they did physically we're to do on a spiritual plane and understanding what that means to be there for one another when people go through various trials or hardships, that we don't just ignore it, but that we strive to do our part, those who are the closest in that respect. On and on it goes in that light.

So, here they're saying, "We are so far apart. And so, on the wall when one area is being attacked they would sound the trumpet over there and others close by would rally to them to help them because this is where the assault is coming from. And you think, what an awesome thing. What spiritual lessons can you learn from that?"

"Our God will fight for us." But we have to do our part. They had to do their part.

So we labored in the work, and half of them held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared. At the same time, I also said to the people, Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day. So again, constantly on guard.

So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off their clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing. So, kind of laugh at that a little bit in that regard, but good lesson in it, you know, that you're always on guard and fully prepared, and there are things about washing as well that we have to learn from there. But anyway, we all have our job to do and sometimes it's a matter of making sure these garments stay washed, cleaned - staying close to God, repenting.

So again, we can read physical stories like this and be in awe of what they went through and how God worked with them and the battles that were there. But we're to see more than that. We're to see our part and the same sort of thing as it applies to us on a spiritual plane.

We've gone through a lot of struggles, and we continue to go through struggles, and we'll continue to go through it until we get where we're going. That's what you have to understand. This isn't going to be easy. It's going to get harder the farther we go along but in different ways. We can be prepared for that as well.

So, I'm going to reminisce just a little bit. Going back to *Time Has Run Out*. Because we can read a story like this and think, how incredible. If you look at the entire span of time it took for Zerubbabel to go there, the time that Ezra went down, and the various things that went along all that period of time, and then here Nehemiah comes along and he's working at putting on the finishing touches if you will. Because everything else has been built up within, as a whole, but now in order to have that and maintain that and keep that the walls and the gates had to be built up.

And again, for us, that's a spiritual thing. To understand that these battles continued all the way, all the way until they finally came to a time - and I'm not going to go into the rest of the story here in Nehemiah, and you can read some of it if you want to - but basically, this is what they had to do until it was completed and then their keeping of Feasts and so forth and drawing closer to God became an awesome thing that's also written there in the book of Nehemiah, how they made certain that the Sabbath was addressed as it needs to be amongst a carnal people and a carnal people around them, and even amongst themselves in order to honor God.

So again, these battles continued right up to the end. That's what we're in it for, all the way to the end whatever that end might be.

Anyway, I thought it'd be good to go through a little part of this since we do have time. I just wasn't sure how much. Again, I'm not going to go through the rest of the book of Nehemiah. This is just an overview of understanding what took place throughout this entire period of time

and the battles that were involved in it over and over and over again. That's been our life over and over and over again.

So, in the introduction of *Time Has Run Out*¹, understanding why this was written and whom it was written to, what we learned along the way, because this is how we learned it. This was written long before a lot of you came in, a lot of you were baptized. So, different ones came along at different times, and it was knowledge that was given. But to understand how it got there is important because these things had to be experienced for these things to come to light. That's how God gave them. We were being refined all along the way. I hope I come to some of these as we go along.

But anyway, "We live at the time..." This is farther into the introduction "—the very age," (and I'm going to say Joshua the Christ. That isn't what was written there at that time). "... when Joshua the Christ will be King over all the earth. But just before that finally happens, man must go through the worst times of his entire 6,000-year history. It is a time referred to in scripture as great tribulation."

Now, even in this, we had to learn. "Great tribulation." We were taught throughout Worldwide, Philadelphia and Laodicea, the great tribulation is a single period of time of 3½ years and it's going to be something that comes upon the whole world that will last exactly that length of time. Little did we understand what this really meant and what it was all about. The great tribulation is something that all of us, everyone whom God has ever worked with, has had to go through in order to become a part of His Family, in order to become a part of, first of all, that government that's coming.

Later on, it says, "God reveals that this time will last for 3½ years. Destruction will engulf the entire world with suffering of truly unimaginable proportions." Again, little did we grasp and understand what this was about. We're still learning from it and we're still going to learn more about these different segments of different periods of times of 1260 days. It's not over with.

So, we go through this process here, and at that time this was very early on as far as the Church is concerned. We weren't nearly halfway through it yet to where we are now.

Going on: "This booklet is written first of all to those who were once united as God's true Church in a single organization called the Worldwide Church of God. But as God forewarned His Church, in the end-time there would be a great apostasy (falling away from the truth). This booklet speaks of those things that have already come upon God's people at the end of this age. None in the scattered Church will receive what is written in this booklet unless they have been called to become a final remnant of all that were scattered from that one organization."

Well, what an incredible thing to understand, that God has to, there as well, wake us up. But still, people had to make choices and decisions throughout that period of time that led up to this being written.

¹ https://www.cog-pkg.org/publications/booklet/time_has_run_out.pdf

“If this is true, then what you read will ring true only because of God’s spirit drawing you.” So, this is something we always have to understand. The only reason you’re here, the only reason you got here is because God’s spirit drew you in the first place. How blessed are you to be a part of something that’s so small but so great? That’s oftentimes what people miss. And people who leave, they miss it. They don’t grasp it.

“If this is true, then what you read will ring true only because of God’s spirit drawing you. If that happens, then you and you alone will decide whether to respond or not.” What an incredible thing that when truth comes along if we’re living God’s way of life and He’s drawn us to this we have the ability to see it. Then we have to make the choice of whether we believe it. So, we came to certain times of truth there that some in the Church just didn’t really believe, and God brought that out in time.

Then an article, “Now in the End-Time.” “About a year ago someone sent me a taped sermon given by a minister who is in one of the larger organizations that split off from the Worldwide Church of God. In that sermon, he mocked the idea that we are now “in” the end of the age. If anyone in the scattered Church of God fails to truthfully acknowledge our recent history—fails to be a faithful witness concerning the truth of those things we have been experiencing as a Church, then they will not be able to grasp the awesome importance to their spiritual well-being that we are indeed IN the end of this age.”

Isn’t that a horrible thing to not grasp where we are in time? I think of the sense of urgency Herbert Armstrong always had. Then for someone to come along who is over one of the large organizations clear back there at this time, didn’t feel that we were in the end-time? That was mind-blowing back then. To hear someone say something of that magnitude that one couldn’t recognize.

And do you know some of the main reasons? Because they believe, most had to believe in order to justify what they were doing, that they had to continue to fulfill what God hadn’t fulfilled through Herbert Armstrong. Meaning that there have to be 144,000 who come out of all this in their organization. Now, that in itself should have taught a giant lesson to everyone because not only did people not grow, they got smaller and they split off into different groups. That’s the witness, the testimony that’s right there in front.

“If we believe we are indeed the true Church of God (those who have the impregnation of God’s holy spirit—who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Joshua the Christ in their lives) ...” Do you know where that comes from? Revelation 12. Because it tells what happens toward the end here, what did happen toward the end here. It was thought at one time that there would be two groups, one who were Philadelphian and one that was Laodicean comingling together at the same time.

Yet it makes it very clear here that all who would come through various things are “those who had the testimony of Joshua the Christ.” What more can you want? That you have that proof in

your life that Joshua lives in and through you. But some didn't even understand what that meant.

"And keep the commandments of God." That's what we should all want and desire even within the scattered Body.

"The clearer you see and are able to believe the truth of who we are and where we are in time, the greater your spiritual strength can become, the stronger your faith can be, and the better prepared you will be for the traumatic time of great physical tribulation that concludes all end-time events."

Now, we've gone through various phases here to learn about that 3½ years, but we still don't know how long a tribulation is going to last, that particular tribulation, which is a physical one that this was referring to. 3½ years? If it is then we very well have been through it for quite a long time already. But we don't know because there are certain things that God hasn't revealed to us specifically about the very end here yet that we thought we understood and knew those things.

And there are reasons for that. I mentioned this before - a lot of it is because of a spirit being that's out there, that there are things he's not to know until it happens. There are things that others even in a scattered Body aren't to know until it happens so that they continue to do what they do acting upon what they believe apart from God.

Anyway, further down in the article: "Failure to believe what God says about His Church at this end-time is a refusal to accept the true testimonies of God—**His witness** of our condition at this time!" So, so often, that's why I was saying, we can look at ourselves and see where we are and what we've been through and learn from it, to grasp what God has been giving to us and to learn from that. Because we're going to continue to build on some of these things. This was quite a while back.

"It is this very refusal that has permeated the Church for the past seven years and has become a witness against us. That is why *Time Has Run Out* for the scattered Church of God. The articles in this booklet can only serve now to aid brethren in their repentance as God brings them to this understanding. Only a small remnant will be called by God to repentance out of the scattered Church."

What an awesome thing to know how many thousands and thousands and thousands were scattered, how many still had some form and sense of the Sabbath or the Holy Days were concerned, and of tithing. But to know how blessed to be a small part that God said He's going to bring through it, He's going to call out of it for a reason.

I think of Gideon. How can we miss that? How can we not be endeared to such a story, that even after so many had been basically put aside from this that there were still others who were there and so many that said, no, you're not to be a part of all this. It's going to be just a really small group. Because there's a lesson in that to be learned that's so powerful. That God is doing this.

He didn't want a group that maybe had 15,000 in it. He didn't want a group that had 10,000 in it, or 7,000, or 6,000, or 5,000 as some of these have been when they have been in one group or split up into different groups and so forth. He wanted a group that was closer to the 300.

"Any minister or organization that distracts brethren from what is true is working against God and the power of God's spirit that should be leading into greater understanding, truth, and faith." You know, these things mean a lot to me because of what we went through. It probably means a lot to different ones who came through the Apostasy. May not mean as much to some others, I don't know. That's why it's good sometimes to go back and read some things and think about our history, think about how we got here, think about the blessing of our being able to be here.

Because I think of this next article. I'm not even going to read the rest of that article there, but there is so much said there of things we didn't grasp nor know but became stronger in as time went along.

The next article, "The Ten Virgins (Matthew 25)." Remember where that started being preached in a basement here in Cincinnati, well, Fairfield. God was bringing this out.

We didn't know fully what it was until we got to this point in time. But because of what we'd gone through, because of what was taking place, and because of the very things that were contained in the first booklet and then in this booklet here, this one here became the reality of that, and we began to understand. Because God showed us, "This is what it means. Should be so clear to you now." Didn't make as much sense before because it wasn't time.

The next one, "The Spiritual Temple (Matthew 24)." What an awesome thing to go through and understand that God had to show us over a period of time here what the temple is. It's about the Church. It's about something that Herbert Armstrong told the Church before he died, but the vast majority didn't pick up on it. The ministry didn't pick up on it like they should have.

And yet going back and looking at some of the things he wrote, listening to some of the sermons he gave he made it very clear what it was. Now, if we lost that as a Church what a shame to us because that's what happened during Laodicea. We began to lose that focus. And if you begin to lose various focus of certain things that God gives to you it won't fit together properly, it won't be there. This is what happened to us. Otherwise, we'd grasp more fully when the Apostasy took place it's about the temple and there's not one stone left upon another. It's not so hard to see.

I was going to read a lot of that but I'm not going to.

"The Man of Sin (1 Thessalonians 2)," next article. What an awesome thing to come to understand that. There are people out there that thought, when that came out, we're stark raving mad. I remember how hard it was to first begin preaching about that. It wasn't easy. Talking about something within our midst at one time and then coming to say, "He did it. He's responsible for it. That's what happened to us."

You see, what happened to too many is they were already becoming protestant. You can't say something bad about someone else. You mean, you can't warn someone else to be on guard because of what someone else has done? You can't mention their name, of something they have done? That was totally misconstrued, what those scriptures were talking about. But that's how people thought. That's how the ministry thought. That's how many brethren thought.

But we had to get past that. I remember having to go in and show where Paul mentioned some by name, and I had to include those in sermons to help this Body come to a point where we recognize that no, God does this. God has His ministers do this from time to time to warn against various ones because of what they're doing.

What a crazy thing to think you can't say something that's true about someone and what they are and what they've done that's hurting the Church. That's why Garner Ted did as much destruction as he did. Because things weren't said to the level and degree they should have been said. Just tell the truth. Just tell the Church.

I think right after the Apostasy how I was told by different ones at headquarters. I've said this before. It came out when we got together with one group that's supposed to be very united together. I was telling the Church everything that was being done, what the board was doing and saying, what the leadership was doing and saying, what had taken place out here in various areas that wasn't right and according to what we'd agreed upon. They told me, the president did, "You should not be telling this to the Church. They can't handle it."

My response is, they can't handle the truth? They can't handle what's going on? Why don't you want them to see this? Now, I didn't say it. Well, I think I probably did in part of that. Why don't you want them to see? Why not? Because you're hiding something. You're hiding what's really going on. You want to have a certain control and if you can't have it, if everything is out there and everybody can see it then they're going to make choices and decisions, in this case, they'd be going to some other group, which people did right and left.

I can go through these things, but I feel that we see it in different levels. I have an appreciation toward it, a conviction of it that's unique to me, and others of you will have a conviction that's unique to you. But we can get tired of hearing various things if we're not careful. This is our history. This is how we got here, and it wasn't easy. Every one of these was part of building the wall. Every part of one of these was building one of the gates - not the temple, but the gates around the city.

Every one of these is one of those categories and every one of those had to be maintained and made strong. That takes a lot of work. But others who came along later on and were able to go in and out of those gates and had that fortification as time went on, did they really appreciate the fact that those walls were there? Did they really appreciate to the same degree that those gates are there by day and by night to close it off when need be, to protect everything that's inside? That's what can happen.

I guess that's the best thing to leave everyone with, that we examine ourselves and say, "How do I feel about all these things? And do I grasp, and do I deeply appreciate what God gave us that we're to hold dear with all of our being?" Because this is what makes us strong, the greater your conviction of everything that God has given to us.

The "Desolation of the Temple (Ezekiel 5)." It wasn't until this past year now and at the Feast and up to the Feast certain things in the book of Ezekiel came out more and more. Because obviously Ezekiel 5 was very much about what happened to the scattered Church after the Apostasy.

But there's a lot more in there that we came to understand that's been given in sermons now where God has shown us it's about us! It says it in there and I've given sermons about part of that too, where it mentions the remnant.

If it hadn't been for a remnant, where would we be? We wouldn't be here. God's Church wouldn't exist. What a blessing that God's called us to have an opportunity to be a part of a remnant, a small amount left over. Again, it's not about the size, it's about what God is doing and the importance it is to God.

Another one: "Clarifying the Seals of Revelation." Here we go again. Things we didn't understand. Things we didn't know. Things that gave us better understanding. You know, the Churches out here that are scattered are still looking for this to begin. That's why it's going to be such a disaster for people, such a shock when they come to learn they haven't been prepared for anything.

They don't know the first Seal has already been opened. Second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh. They don't know these things. And so, "Where is your thinking? There has to be some kind of fear out here surely about Russia and China, and hmmm. Don't know. And how does that fit into all these Seals?" Anyway, sad when we don't hold fast what God has given to us.

Anyway, we will stop there. But all this story all the way through in the book of Ezra, and Nehemiah, especially here that we've gone through in the last part here, are very much related to the Church just as so many other things are throughout scriptures. The more we go through those things, the more God gives to us, the more we'll see it.

This Body is important to God. It finishes off, just like the finishing off of the temple. The finishing of the walls, the finishing of the gates, that's us. We're finishing them just before God's Kingdom is established. What an awesome thing to be a part of that building. Because that's where we are in the story. That's why it's so important to God.