

Today will be *Part 5* of our current series that's now continuing on into a new year, *Elijah, Elisha, & More*.

Last Sabbath we ended after going through the story of the woman who had a room built and set aside for whenever Elisha would travel through that area, that he could stay there and have his own place. Then the incident was that Elisha wanted to give her something. She didn't want anything as far as recognition was concerned and so he asked of his servant there that which she wanted or had wanted in her past, whatever it might be.

But anyway, it was about having a child; she'd never had a child, had always wanted one, but was of age past that. So, he told her that she would about that time of year next year give birth to a son, which came to pass. He later died, if you remember the story, and Elisha went back and God through him brought him back to life again.

Anyway, incredible stories here as we go through some of this. Over and over again when you come to the story of Elisha - a lot of things that God did through Elijah - but when you come to Elisha, again, a lot of different things that were taking place and God making it very clear through Elijah and Elisha the examples of the things that took place as far as the nation of Israel was concerned, and even partially toward Judah because of the letter that Elijah sent after he was taken away and removed from people. He had done his job and God gave him rest in that respect, but still had a job to do later on.

But again, all these examples are on a very physical plane. They're awesome. They're inspiring. They're exciting to go through and read, and we're going to continue through this Sabbath and next Sabbath as well going through some of the stories having to do with Elisha. But again here, God making it very clear how He works, how He works through those whom He calls to serve for whatever purpose that might be, and the example of Elijah, because of the name, and it carries with it something unique and special because we've talked about the spiritual "types" of Elijah that are prophetic and that which Christ spoke of concerning John the Baptist. Because it's all about God's plan. It's all about God's purpose and how God works. Again, very physical examples, but we're to learn spiritual lessons through those as well, which is what we're striving to go through and learn. Again here, you think of this period of time of Elisha's life and how God continued to reveal that He was working through both him and Elijah to Israel by different miracles that He performed.

We don't have the same thing. The Church, in that respect, the early Church did in some respects because God did some certain things there in order to raise up the Church and begin to help people to understand this was unique, something incredible that God was doing, and a

different process here as the Church was raised up. Totally different than how it has been with us in that respect because it's been around now for nearly two thousand years.

But that's where, again, very foundational things were established. God was adding more, things were being recorded about the life of Christ and what he taught, and then through them much more was written then (and Paul that was called), and those things that were set up that God would build more upon as far as the Church was concerned. Always growing through time. Always more being revealed through time.

Now that we're toward the end of six thousand years, God continues to do that but in an even greater way. Again, it's all about His plan because it's about Joshua the Christ first of all. John the Baptist was sent as a "type" of the Elijah, and that was about Christ's first coming. Much of that was very physical, in that respect, because it had to do with the things that Christ was to fulfill as our Passover, things that people didn't comprehend nor understand.

And now, it's a different time. So, we've talked about, and those things were talked about during Philadelphia concerning Herbert Armstrong fulfilling a "type" of the Elijah. Later on, God revealing very clearly that those things were continuing on in PKG. It's all about, again, preparing for Joshua the Christ, this time in a much more powerful way because of His coming as King of kings and Lord of lords and there is that preparation then for those things taking place that God wants established.

Much of that that He's establishing is the truth. It's more about His plan and purpose, things revealed during Philadelphia, things revealed through Herbert Armstrong to the Church, truths that we know that have been given to us. Then a continuation of those things through PKG. God continuing to give more and more truth, all preparation for in a greater way, in a more powerful way now Christ's second coming.

So again here, the spiritual "types" of Elijah are indeed about the meaning of the name. Elijah meaning, "Our God Yahweh." It's about what He's doing. It's about how He's accomplishing it. It's about how He's fulfilling it. When we look back at the stories of Elijah and Elisha we see so many things that God accomplished and did through them making it very clear how He works. He told Israel over and over again and yet it was refused.

We have lived through a time in the last two thousand years where truth has gone out in the world, but as a whole, the witness is people don't want it. They reject it unless God is drawing them. God has to be involved with the mind and the humbling of those individuals whom He's going to work with or through and give opportunity for.

And yet, even in that, and especially in the past year, God has been showing us that even within the Church the vast majority have rejected it. Given time, the vast majority since the very beginning have rejected it, rejected their calling. Which, I am thankful that God has

revealed even more so that's far, far more serious than anything that physical Israel ever did because they couldn't grasp the truth. They couldn't comprehend anything that was spiritual. But we've been able to. You think of what Christ went through, what He suffered in order for us to be forgiven of sin so that God could dwell in us, so that Christ could dwell in us, and we could dwell in them. Then to see how that has been treated through time.

Because people are tested over a period of time, basically a lifetime, their lifetime, whatever that life is. The only thing that will be somewhat unique and different in that is toward the end here, and some having gone through things that they have been tried in, will have been tried in who will in some cases be much younger. It won't have to be an entire lifetime. Some won't have to see death is what I'm saying. That is unique to those few who will be in that part.

But again here, to see what has taken place over time, it's very sobering that people can come to an understanding of what it means to be forgiven of sin, what it means to be in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, and then not live it, not desire it with all their being, not fight for it. Because that's what it's about, we have to fight. We have to persevere in the way that God shows us, to live up to the name, to fulfill the name that God is offering us, spiritual Israel, in order to be in Elohim.

Those are incredible things to comprehend and understand because they haven't always been understood, obviously, within the Church. God has continued to give more and more and did so much more than through Herbert Armstrong. Now even, I mentioned that last Sabbath, what gave me incredible encouragement, if you will, was how God continued after my little three-year departure, God continued to reveal truth and brought us up to leveling off at 57 total. To me, that's astounding and awesome. 36. Double. And so, the story of Elijah and Elisha on a spiritual plane has given me incredible encouragement.

God gives His people, God gives His servants, encouragement at times when they need it. I needed it. That gave me a boldness and a strength to continue forward in a more powerful way than I otherwise might have instead of struggling along the way continually. And so, it's awesome how God works with us and takes care of His people.

These "types" that we're going through here are incredible. The stories we learn from them are awesome. I want to mention again that when God did things through Elisha we should be moved by them. The stories of things He did on a physical plane are always awesome when you go throughout the scripture. But it's much more so when you relate it to what we're living now and the truths that God has given to us that they're far, far, far more powerful, and far more meaningful than any of those miracles that took place, if we comprehend it. That's what so much of this is about.

**2 Kings 4:38.** So, after the story here of the woman whose son was brought back to life. **Then Elisha returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land. Now, the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, and he said to his servant...** So, this term "sons of the prophets" is in relationship to from all that's written, stories of pupils, of, first of all, Elijah.

Perhaps you remember some of the older stories of things. I think of the example of Herbert Armstrong raising up three colleges in time to teach, to prepare people for a work. This is similar to what Elijah was doing. They were pupils that would come and be drawn to this particular point here of going through things of learning that was given to them. In this case Elijah. Then Elisha did the same thing later on. He taught them of the prophets, of their job, of things they'd done and those in times past as well leading up to that point in time for all that they knew to that point in time, their present truth, if you will. And so, this expression the "sons of the prophets," that's what it's talking about. It's not talking about children who were born who were of the prophets. It's talking about young people coming along who were learning of the prophets and God working with them in many cases in that manner.

**...the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, and he said to his servant, Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.** They were known as students. They were pupils being taught by him.

**So, one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew.** Now, most people, if you've ever been around gourds, they grow wild. They're not things you cut up into stew. A lot of them can make you really, really, really sick. You wonder who are the first ones that found out. Watermelon is okay. Cantaloupe is okay. That one is not. There are so many things in food like that I wonder about sometimes, "Ugh. The first ones. Who were they?" Anyway, people have tried all kinds of things in life, and some have killed them. So, you learn from that.

**...and they sliced them, put them in the stew.** In other words, this is a time of famine. They didn't have a whole lot. He found something that looked edible to him. He brought it in to add it to what was already there because they didn't have much. So, thinking, this is going to add more to it.

**...though they did not know.** So, the rest, in other words, didn't know. The rest of this is added. Sometimes you read things that are in italics, they're just something written in and sometimes take away from the meaning. The point being is that the rest didn't realize what he had done. **Then they served it to the men to eat.**

**Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, Man of God, there is death in the pot!** "It's pretty bad; this stuff is killing us. We feel horrible." So, it had a fast effect on how it was affecting them. **And so, they were unable to eat it, it says. So,**

**he said, Elisha said, Then bring some flour and put it into the pot, and said, Serve it to the people, that they may eat. And there was nothing harmful in the pot.**

You think, what's this about some flour? Was it the flour? What was it that changed? It was another miracle that God performed. It was just one of those things that sometimes people would question, "Well, is it really okay to eat? I felt bad. Is it okay now to go back and eat more of this?" This happens all the time in life. It happens in the Church a lot. It has happened all through the past two thousand years that there are times that things are done or said or given that sometimes there are questions, a person will question because it doesn't seem right to them. In this, perhaps, not seeming right to some of them.

The point being is to understand how God works, how God leads, guides, and directs, and how we learn to live by faith if you will. So, it's a good example of how something may not make a lot of sense to a person who might otherwise question, "Well, why do that?"

It's kind of like some of the other stories we're going to read in a little while. There are things that people are told and it's like, "Well, wouldn't it be better to do something else?" The story of Naaman we're coming up to - probably you know who I'm talking about - and why do that? Of course, he's carnal—of course, the Israelites were too—and so, it's natural, carnal thinking. But he comes from a totally different background of not having knowledge of anything to do with God or prophets or anything else. But Israel, a little bit different; they had some knowledge but not much. They didn't want it.

So again, coming down to the fact that it's not a matter of human reasoning. Human reasoning gets us into trouble. It truly does when we start relying on our own thinking. Again, we've gone through so many things through time, and of recent time, that help to drive the point home that there is a way that's given to us to walk, to live, to think, and it can be a test to us as to whether or not we receive it and see God in it if we are convicted of God and how God works.

These were not fully yet. They were students and so forth. But there were those times they were told an example before this, where Elisha had told them to shut up because he already knew, and it wasn't to be spoken and talked about and zeroed in on. That's kind of tough sometimes, to take something. It's better to be quiet right now for a purpose and a reason and not to go talking about it. So, whatever was all involved, sometimes that's the answer.

And so, we learn to do it, whatever it might be. Some things we're not to talk about. Some things we're to hold in. Anyway. So, it comes down to a matter of God's government and how God works, and that's what these stories are largely about with Elijah and Elisha, how God is working. If someone is convicted of that, they will listen to that. And if not, well, they're going to have battles. The history of the Church is there have been a lot of battles.

So, areas or individuals in some cases if you will, within the Church, sometimes it can be a matter of individuals given certain counsel or advice, guidance maybe, whatever term you want to use depending on the situation, or it might be certain areas of the Church told to do things in a certain way. But then the tendency oftentimes is to talk to or to have known of someone else who was given different advice of a matter that seems similar to them or to an area, and someone is asking someone else in their area, "Well, what are you doing there?" Now, this has happened of recent times within the Church, and it happens quite often.

The point being is that each individual may be given certain guidance and counsel, but how God works with each individual is an individual matter and you can't always compare the two because you don't know all that's involved. You don't know what God is doing in some cases. Sometimes it boils down to that, what God is doing with one individual He's not working with in the same way with another individual in the Church because it's a spiritual matter. You can't see all spiritual matters. We can't. We have to rely on God to show us.

That's what I strive to do all the time, waiting for God, looking to God to give the guidance because all counsel is not the same. There are no clear black and white answers sometimes to give in some cases that are a matter of God's spirit. Does that make sense? Because of how God is working.

Same thing with different areas. There are situations in different areas where God is working differently to teach something different to an area, an entire area of a congregation because there is something to be learned there. But if someone talks to another area and they're doing something different, it's like, well, who's right? Which one are we supposed to be doing? The reality is you do what is given to you.

If it's to an individual, there is a purpose for it, there's a reason for it. If it's for an area, a region, a different Church area, there is a reason for it. You can't go out there comparing and deciding for yourself what would be better or what you might want to do. It doesn't work that way. Sometimes it's done for that very reason, one thing given to another that's different to another, from another, because sometimes it forces an individual to work through it. What's the right thing? Well, what were you told? That's the right thing. Always works that way.

Sometimes in times past that's been rough on God's Church because that understanding hasn't been fully there, and the reality is sometimes there were ministers who were going off base, and sometimes you just had to hold in there and do what was ever given to you within the framework you had to do the best you could under the conditions that were there, but to do it in an attitude toward God of obedience. You're doing it for that reason. In time, if there is something err or wrong, God will take care of it. He always does in His time. Sometimes we may have to go through a long time to get there. Persevere in faith.

So, the real issue boils down to unity, oneness first of all with God knowing how God works and striving to be in oneness with that and being careful then of our own ideas, of different ideas, of ways that we think that we're okay, that our thinking is okay, and someone else making a judgment, it's just wrong. That'll lead somebody out of the Church quicker than anything you can say, attitudes. I say those things because it's been my history within the Church to this point in time. That's what we go through.

We are still going through things where people still continue to go by the wayside. We're still going through things where people think that they're right about certain things or can do certain things. The reality is, God is cleansing His Church, and if we're listening, He's making believers out of everyone that will listen, that things are going to continue right up to the end. Hopefully, we're becoming more and more convicted of that, of the power of God to reveal and to take care of matters within the Body.

It's not an easy trip. It's not an easy road. It's not an easy way, and it never was meant to be. You have to fight for it. It's a matter of your own personal conviction. If you want it, you will fight for it. If it means everything to you, you'll fight for it, you'll count the cost in your own life, or the price, if you will, to be paid in a different way, in a greater way.

**Verse 42—Then a man came from Baal Shalisha and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in a sack. So, he said, Give it to the people, this is what Elisha then said, Give it to the people... So again here, following up in this period of time, no rain, time of famine. Give it to the people that they may eat. But the servant said, What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?**

There wasn't that much. It was for the prophet there, in that respect. "Shall I give this to one hundred men?" Well, now if they'd had the example of the story of Christ, they might have been a little stronger when the loaves were sent out and you're talking about thousands there. But here they didn't have that example and it's like this thing of human reasoning, questioning, "How can you do this? What are you doing?"

**He said again, Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the Eternal... So, now he brings God into the picture. "This isn't just coming from me, though you should have known it." Thus says the Eternal, They shall eat and have left over. So, he set it before them and they ate and had left over, according to the word of the Eternal.**

So, these things just kept happening and kept happening. But every one of these on a spiritual plane are things that have happened, do happen in God's Church, things we're to learn from spiritually because it's a matter of our focus, it's a matter of what we see, it's a matter of conviction and so forth.

I think of how we've been looking at some of the truths (and I mentioned that in the introduction here as well) given to the Church during the time of Philadelphia and then more during PKG. I think it'd be good to continue in that focus of bringing some of these things out from time to time because this is what we're talking about here, Truth #4. In that example and so many of the examples of Elisha and Elijah, it comes down to the government of God.

I have been rather dumbfounded by this because the very first one attributed to Herbert Armstrong is the very one that if that had been understood and seen for what it truly is we wouldn't have gone through all the difficulties that we did in the Church, if the ministry had grasped that, what the government of God really is.

Sometimes people can think, "Well, I'm in agreement with the government of God," but then people are tested and tried in various ways to reveal whether they are or aren't. Where they aren't, they're supposed to repent, and those who repent are blessed, and those who don't continue on in that wrong course. So again, just going through and looking at some of the history of the Church and things that continue to this present time because I was thinking about this and thinking, how often does it happen, this come up? I'd say, as a whole, every week something comes up that reveals an understanding of government isn't there. We think we see it. We think we grasp the ins and outs of it, but sometimes we don't. It's all about being in a unity and a oneness with God in understanding how God is working in our life. If we see that clearly then we're awesomely blessed, we truly are.

So, it says on the site there about this:

**4 (1) The government of God.** When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth.

You know, what an incredible thing. This world is so sick right now. Government's...? I think it's an awesome thing in itself that God's revealing, which He's given to us to know and to say, "We can't govern ourselves." It's been said all through Philadelphia up to now, the governments, but it's being made manifest now in a way that it never has. We can't govern ourselves. Such division. All around the world, look at different governments that are out there and it is an absolute nightmare, a nightmarish mess. God's bringing that to the surface so it can be learned in time, so people can go back and learn what they actually lived through: "We can't. Look what it led to."

God's government was restored to His Church during Philadelphia.

Within the Church. That was the beginning of it. But how many really grasped it? Well, we don't know. But we know toward the end there were a whole lot who didn't because of what took place because of what followed. It goes on to say:



It is not a government of men where decisions are made by such practices as voting or one's own will...

So, that's the primary thing. It's not a matter of our own will. That's our human nature. That's the nature of people in the world. That's why there is voting. This morning I had the news on for just a little bit. It's all I could take. Right away they're coming on with this panel of what they think is important in the upcoming elections that they want to discuss.

You think, "I don't want to sit and listen to a whole bunch of people, four or five..." You already know the answer to that one, "four or five people giving their expertise on what they think." You already know what they think because of that channel. So, you know what kind of people they're going to have up there and what they're going to say. If I went to the other channel and they had a panel, it's going to be the same thing but a different twist on it because they're coming from a different side.

You think, what a sick, sick thing that there is so much time anymore spent in news, what we call news today. It's not about news, of what events are happening in the world. It's about what people think about what they want news to be, I guess. It's just sick. We're to become very sick of it. The world should become sick of it and they can't change a thing.

So again here:

... [not a matter of] one's own will but as God leads through the power of His spirit. (Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12)

That's what it's all about, to learn these things. We're ever learning in these things. Don't think that you have it fully grasped. As we go through different truths, don't think that we have it all yet. We don't. Because every truth in one respect or another has been built upon through time. More is continually given in the sense of refining and grasping it in a better way in the sense of becoming convicted of it and learning what it's all about. This thing here seems simple, "the government of God," and it's not because of our human nature and our own human reasoning and our own human doubts. That's what we have to be on guard against because these things determine through our experiences in life whether or not we really are in unity with God. Are we in agreement with God and how God is working?

Of course, in there, it gives Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12. But I do want to go back and just be reminded here of Ephesians 4, so just a few scriptures there. This is the design. This is the way it's to work. It hasn't always worked that way, but it is the design. When people have yielded to it, when the ministry has yielded to it, and the Church has yielded to it, it's produced great fruit. When it hasn't been it's created incredible chaos, especially within the church because of the Church. When people go against God's spirit it really makes things bad then.

**Ephesians 4:11—And he gave some apostles...** So, in the beginning, He gave quite a few. But it was just a few in the scheme of things, and as I mentioned earlier, much was built upon that. Scriptures were recorded, things were given in a very powerful way for the Church as a kind of foundation to build upon. We don't know all the history, but so much began to be lost through time, the struggle.

One day I look forward to reading about or talking to the individuals who lived, as an example, through Thyatira because that was, from what we grasp and comprehend, a little over a thousand years long. Incredible. To see a particular era continue on and how God must have had to work with different ones, it had to be an incredibly miraculous way because of what they were dealing with in the world, in the Roman world at that time, and that church that rose up.

So, we have much to learn from even times past of what was done within the Church. But then we had a unique period, Philadelphia, and God beginning to restore things in an incredible way, and He gave an apostle because of something He was doing. To restore truth. They only had three basis truths - incredible - Sardis, at the end. You look at the ones that God gave then, things that the world hasn't known. There are things in there that were given that even the early apostles didn't understand fully. God gave more because God worked through him to bring together many of the things that some of them had written.

Because it's like Herbert Armstrong used to talk about, this big puzzle, and God gives that framework and then we start filling in the pieces. By God's spirit, we start filling in the pieces and know where they fit. Sometimes wrong. One looks like it fit in a certain place but didn't and it goes into another, but as Herbert Armstrong said, we're always getting closer and closer to the truth. There is no one else that does this as far as a religious organization. When they learn something that's wrong, you repent of that, you work to make changes, and you make it right and you keep going forward. Then we have more and more truth. It's a beautiful picture.

That's the way it's been through the last two thousand years. But at this particular time of Philadelphia, you think, what a beautiful thing when you look at 18 Truths and how there are things given there that even the apostles didn't fully understand, and then new things as well that were given. Incredible. That's why it's a "type" of the Elijah because of what it was preparing for. It prepared this work at the end even. It truly did. Without that, we wouldn't be here. It was something that had to be done for that era, for that time, and then for that which would follow in time.

**He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.** So, through two thousand years that's what's taken place within the Church. Some of it

hadn't existed at different times, and then in other times it did. God gave some at different times, whatever His purpose was, whatever He was doing. Incredible.

**...for the perfecting of the saints.** For those who are called. Because the reality is without them there is no Church. Without them, there is no Sabbath. Without them, there are no Holy Days. Because that's how God works. He gave them to work with the Church, to lead, guide, and direct the Church. He gives them extra help, if you will, in order to do that job, to teach, to guide, to direct, and whatever God's spirit is leading in at that particular time. It's a beautiful thing.

It's not something human beings can work out. That's why I really hated what was happening in Laodicea later on when we'd go to refresher programs, and they would start talking about homiletics. "Well, what's homiletics?" Well, it's basically looking at the religious practice of protestant churches and how they give sermons. It's how they organize and prepare their sermons. And so, we're supposed to learn from them how to do a job. It made me want to barf, now so more than then because I didn't like it then because it didn't fit, and what we were being told didn't fit, that you have to plan out certain things.

It's like one man even after the Apostasy got up and gave a sermon and basically told the ministers who were preparing their sermons on the computer that basically, you're not using that book, the Bible! You think, "Don't you know what's on the computer anymore? You can have several versions at one time. You don't have several versions up there, you just have the one, and I know it's the Old King James because that's how you work."

Anyway, I'm sorry, I'm making a little bit of fun of that. But you think, how dumb that statement was. But that's what he really believed. It's like they're sinning, whatever ministers aren't using their Bible. You think, "You need to get caught up a little bit as to how technology is working when it comes to computers. They are a great asset." He was an evangelist.

That was one of many things that helped us that year. That was 1997 because we split up and went into different areas at that time out of the region here and looking at that particular organization, trying to find where is God working? That was one of several things that happened during that Feast that helped us realize it's not here.

Anyway, one of the hardest things I've ever done was to determine that we would host a Feast site because of where God places His name. I can't tell you how hard that was for me as a pastor at that time because of everything I had learned and been taught because of that thought of being presumptuous and taking something upon oneself. But we had to come to a point, we had to have a conviction, I did have, we had to have, we have to do the best we can under the circumstances because we could see certain places where God was not. Incredible, what we've gone through as a Church to get where we are.

...some teachers, pastors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the Church, for the sake of the Church, for the work of ministry, for the things that happen at different times for different purposes, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. That's primarily done through sermons, through the Sabbath, through the Holy Days, Bible studies when we used to have them, things that are written that we have opportunity to read, whatever it might be.

...for the edifying of the Body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith. That's the greatest battle right there. What gets in the way is our own thinking, our own human reasoning, our own will, if you will, our own will in things. That tests us as to whether we're seeking to do God's will or we want to see ours accomplished (whatever it is we're wanting to do), and it's about faith because that has to do with what we believe. What we believe can only come from God.

So, whatever is true, whatever belief that we can have as God's people, that has to come from God. It has to be revealed by God because we can't figure it out on our own. Isn't it a marvel to understand that? God has to give it in the mind. You can't go out and talk to anyone. You can't give it to anyone. You can't reason with anyone. That's why when another evangelist got up in a TV program after the Apostasy and told people, "If you'd just open your Bibles, you can prove this to yourself. You can see the Sabbath!" This was not true.

Those who are being called can really "see" it. Others might become convicted of it because of things you're saying in the sense of a physical thing like they do because some go to the Seventh Day Adventist, and some become Messianic Jews because they realize that the Bible says something about the Sabbath and they start realizing, well, Sunday is mentioned a few times, but there is nothing in there that makes it clear. Even the Catholic Church admits that it's only by their authority that it was changed to Sunday. Yeah.

Sometimes people in a physical plane can go through that process, but it's not a spiritual one, it's just a physical one. So, could people start going to different organizations? Yes. Do they "see" the truth? No. It's that simple. Incredible.

"Until they all come into the unity of the faith." So, that's God's desire that we be at one with Him, that we be in agreement with Him. The faith, what we believe, and we've chosen to live by it, we seek to live by it, and we cry out to God for help to live by it. That's what unity is. Awesome!

"Until we all come into the unity of the faith." That's what we're waiting for, for two thousand years in the Church in that respect as far as Joshua returning, as far as the work of Elijah, "Our God Yahweh," because that's what we're a part of. It's about God and what He's doing. It's about the government and the structure of it and what's coming to this earth that he's going to bring. It's about God.

...until we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect person, if you will, because it all starts there. Beautiful, Passover, High Priest, King of Kings, Kingdom of God, Elohim.

...into the measure and stature of the fullness of Christ. So, he's the first of the firstfruits and everyone else has to go through things, through a process, and one day be able to become a part of the same Body, the same life, eternal life...or everlasting life.

So again here, so often we feel like we see and grasp these to the fullest until we come to a point in time where there is something we question. When we come to that point, that's the time to pray and cry out to God for help. "Is it me? Is it my will? Am I in disagreement?" So, it's about judgment. It's how we think, and God wants us to see how we're thinking because only in that manner can we really repent fully of things anyway. We have to become convicted of that entire process, living it.

2 Kings 5. The next example of a miracle through Elisha is one that carries with it a "type" that reveals something done in a perverted manner, if you will, on a physical plane that's been done on a spiritual plane. Now, I'm not sure we're going to get to this because I spent more time in some of these others so I may not get to the whole story today, but that's what we're going to build up to.

Now, it's going to show something, to me, that's exceedingly perverted in thinking—now, this is on a physical plane—that has been done over and over and over again in the Church on a spiritual plane, and this here, obviously, is going to be a "type" of the physical that's exceedingly perverted, in that respect, but that which is spiritual is far more that's been done in the Church that's far worse.

There are going to be some other lessons in this as well. So, that may be all we see are a few of the lessons, because I'm not sure I'm going to make it all the way down here. Anyway, this is about Naaman.

So, it starts out here in **2 Kings 5:1—Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Assyria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master**, in the eyes of the king of Assyria. So, he respected his commander of the army, obviously, or he wouldn't be the commander of the army. He had this esteem for him, in that respect, **because by him the Eternal had given victory to Syria.**

So, incredible. God was doing some things on a physical plane even here with Syria, with Naaman, for a purpose. That's what we're reading about now. It's amazing how God has worked things out through time, some for a spiritual purpose, some for a physical purpose that can be learned from on a spiritual plane, the lessons that are there.

What an incredible thing. If you really think that through, and to understand the planning involved to do this through time, different accounts, it's all a building thing, building. Every time. All through scripture from the very beginning, from Genesis on, it's this construction that's taking place, it's this blueprint that was set out so long ago, and God's following it meticulously so. Some of it having to do with lessons that are going to be taught into the future, and not until the future in some cases, they won't have a fulfillment until the future in some places.

I was talking to someone this morning who talked about part of this, talked about Gideon's army. I think of that often because I think of the numbers, a small group, and look what they did. I marvel at what God is doing here that we don't really grasp yet. One day you will, and you will marvel. We don't marvel yet to that degree because we can't because we're not there yet.

Anyway, so it goes on with this particular story here. **He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper.** So, God chose someone to do something through, and this wasn't all decided at some point in his life. God worked it out. That's what I'm talking about, this matter of this building process, this blueprint, things that were mapped out to happen, whether it be this, whether it be the flood, whether it be the example of Noah, whether it be Abraham. All of it was mapped out. The individuals to fulfill those things were worked with, were molded, and fashioned, were called later on to fulfill certain things.

But that's the thing that God is doing. He's following this plan all through time and we're blessed to be an incredible part of that plan right now as far as PKG is concerned. This wasn't an accident. "What are we going to do now? There's been an apostasy. Let's see... Hmmm, the Church must continue until Joshua returns..." It was all decided a long time ago. I hope we understand those things and marvel at those things, how great God truly is. The more we see that, the greater He becomes in your mind.

So, he was a leper. **Now, the Syrians...** Why? Because of what God's going to do. It wasn't an accident that he had leprosy, that he was the commander of the army. It was already shown here he'd been given great favor by the Eternal God for things he was going to accomplish to become and to be commander of the army in the first place and to fulfill and things we can read about today. Amazing.

**Now, the Syrians had gone out on raids and had brought back a captive, a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife.** Another one of those that just happened to be, just happened to be an accident I guess. **Then she said to her mistress, If only my master, speaking of Naaman, If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy.** Now, where did she come up with this? Is it something she heard? Did everybody in Israel talk like this? Did young children that grew up, did they

talk like this? God gave it to her. For whatever knowledge she had at some point in Israel, for a purpose she carried it with her, and God brought it to her memory, her mind to be moved by this to say this. This wasn't an accident that she said this. It wasn't of her own ability that she said this.

**For he would heal him of his leprosy. Then Naaman went in and told his master, saying, Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel.** So, he went into the king and told him the story. Incredible!

**Then the king of Syria said, Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel. So, he departed and took with him...** So why is Naaman doing this? He wants to be healed of his leprosy. If there is some way and if somehow this is true and this individual, and perhaps more story was told to her that we don't know about, about Elisha, if you will, we don't know. But if it was he had to wonder in his own mind, "Is it possible?" That's why he went to the king like he did and told him the story as he did and now the king is letting him depart and go on down there with the letter to the king of Israel.

**So, he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.** So, a lot of wealth he took of his own.

**Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised...** You got to think about this, what the king is being told from the king of Assyria, who has a lot of power and they've had battles in times past. Anyway, so, it's like, **Please be advised when this letter comes to you that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you might heal him of his leprosy.** The king. "The king of Syria is sending me a letter telling me that my responsibility is to see that his captain is healed of leprosy. Might as well go out and kill myself right now!" I mean, not that he necessarily thought that part, but he was a pretty negative king, if you remember the stories here, quite a downer.

**Then it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and he said, Am I God?** He tore his clothes, which is a sign of humility. It's a sign of humbling oneself. So, they took a little bit with them out of Judah. Not much, but they do remember some of those things. So, he rips his clothes and goes through this thing. It's a part of a matter of show of, "Am I God? I can't do this!"

**...to kill and to make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy?** Now, if he had a reason to be negative before, he really did now, because this is real. You have to laugh at these stories, you really do.

**Therefore, please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me.** So, he's spewing all these things out and he's realizing, "I can't do this. I can't fulfill this," and it's like, "war is

coming because I'm not going to be able to accomplish this, and he's told me that I need to be advised to do it!"

**Verse 8—So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying...** So, how did he know all this? Well, perhaps messengers brought him whatever is said, or God gave it to him, we don't know.

**Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.** So, what do you think he's going to do? Well, he knows he can't, and he's known of some other things that have taken place that have bugged the tar out of him in the first place. These kings have always had problems with the prophets so, "Send him on down there and then I'll have reason. I was told by this religious leader, and he didn't do it so it's his fault!" Whatever. Anyway, human reasoning.

**Then Naaman went with his horse and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house.** Now, you have to picture all this too, of how this is going to affect Naaman. **So, Elisha sent a messenger to him.** He didn't come out. He sent a messenger down to where he was, **saying, Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and be cleaned.** Now, this was highly insulting to Naaman. He expected greater things.

**But Naaman became furious, exceedingly mad, and went away and said, Indeed, I said to myself, He will surely come out and stand and call on the name of the Eternal his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal my leprosy!** That's what he expected. He expected this great big thing that was going to take place. "He's going to wave his hands in whatever way that he's used to in his religion and all the gyrations that some of the people of Baal and whatever go through, and he's going to do the same thing and make this big production and I'm going to be healed. He should have at least done that instead of telling me to go wash seven times in the Jordan!" It was an insult. Pride. Haughtiness. Incredible, what can happen to people.

**Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean? So, he turned and went away in a rage.**

**Then his servants came near and spoke to him, and said...** Now, you got to think about the servants, too. This is kind of a tricky situation. When you know someone is so furious and you try to reason with them, this may not go well. **My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more when he says to you, Wash, and be clean?** "It's a simple thing." So, he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan.

I love this how over and over again this example of seven is being used. God driving the point home it's complete. So often that example is given again and again and again. It's a design by



which God works with in a very powerful way in so many things. We understand the Sabbath, seventh day, but so many things, Holy Days, etcetera, etcetera. It reflects the Eternal God that God is doing it. Creation - seven days.

**So, he dipped seven times in the Jordan**, showing where it's coming from, God is doing it, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

**Then he returned to the man of God.** Can you imagine something like this, having leprosy for so long? I don't know if any of you have ever seen pictures of leprosy but it's not a pretty thing. Those of you who haven't, go look it up. Use your computer. Anyway, it's horrible in what it does to the body.

**So, he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and he came and stood before him; and he said, Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel.** Now, this was very moving to him, and he felt that inside. This moved him, because if you've had something like this for so long and then it's gone and someone said they were going to do this and it's from God, the God of Israel, it would be a moving thing, obviously, and it was to him very powerfully so.

**Now, therefore, please take a gift from your servant.** He's calling him his servant now. He's looking up to him in a very powerful way as a representative of God if you will.

**But he said, As the Eternal lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing. Yet he urged him to take it, but he refused.** So again here, he wasn't going to take that upon himself and receive that, which he's showing this came from the Eternal God. That's who you thank.

Now, Naaman was willing to give a very large sum for his healing. He brought it along for that purpose because he had this hope. It wasn't necessarily a belief, obviously, at this point, but he had this hope that this would be accomplished, that what this little girl said that was true, and that there would be an individual who would be able to do this for him. So, that was a hope that he had stirred up within him, which I believe with all my being came from God as well, otherwise, it couldn't have been there to that degree, but he was willing because of this belief on a very physical plane to give a very large sum for his healing. Then he acknowledged how great that healing was, and he was exceedingly thankful for it.

I cannot help but ask the question then, do we grasp the value of the healing that God is giving to us? Because we've been called to a healing that's spoken of over and over again in scripture and it is a most marvelous thing that is far, far, far greater than someone being healed of leprosy, washing themselves, dipping themselves seven times in the Jordan river. It's a great story. It's an awesome story, but we're to learn from it on a spiritual plane, and that's the purpose of it being here.

So, truly, how thankful are we? Because these are the kinds of things we should think about from time to time. The Sabbath is a great time for thinking about some of those things - how God has called us and working with us and what we have before us and what's taking place in our minds. I think so often about this mind is being transformed, so thankful for that, that we don't have to stay as we are as carnal, selfish human beings. We can grow from that and out of that.

Not completely, obviously. We're always going to have self with us. But to understand what God is doing for a purpose that one day we're going to be in God's Family composed of spirit but have a mind that is in absolute unity and oneness with God and we're going to be in total agreement with everything of God? So, we grow in those things, and we make choices now in this life to choose those things, to be in agreement, to be convicted of them. We want to go through the experiences necessary to help us to be convicted of God, that God is right, of God's truth, of God's ways, as long as we fight for that and seek that and cry out for that and acknowledge what we are.

I marvel sometimes because I know what I am. We're nothing. We're absolutely nothing. We're puny human beings, not great in the world in any fashion or form, and yet God has called us something that's so incredibly great beyond our ability to comprehend it great.

Hebrews 12. Thought it'd be good to read a couple of scriptures along this line. **Hebrews 12:11—Now, no chastening for the present seems to be enjoyable.** When you go through hard things, especially after doing something wrong and suffering for it (and sometimes for doing things that are right you can suffer for it), and whenever you suffer and you go through hardship because you're striving to live God's way of life, when that's the primary thing that's the focus of it all and you suffer, it's hard.

This way is not easy. Going on this path is not easy. It's filled with battles. It's filled with hardships. It's filled with trials because the world isn't going this way, the world doesn't want this way. I don't even think they have a word for us. Well, they do, but some of them aren't too good. But some of them at least out there are called cults. I think we've passed that. I don't even know if we deserve that one from the world as far as they feel. I read some of those things sometimes and I think, "You've got to be kidding! Wow!" Anyway, that's the way it is. That's what we live.

So, whatever we go through that's difficult, whether on the job or with communication or people we know or family, and especially if it involves the Church or our convictions of what we believe, or we see things in ourselves that we have to conquer and overcome and God reveals something in us that we see that we repent of, that we're striving to repent of and we're trying to overcome something, there are battles. Those things are hard.

We're not jumping up and down and really happy at moments. There are times you get down. There are times you're pulled down in the sense of your nature, your thinking, and you feel you've got a tremendously heavy load. Then, so, you do. God's always there. He's willing to help us. It's like Christ said, "My load is light; it's not heavy."

There's a peace we can receive from God that is unique through that understanding, through truth that surpasses everything else. But a lot of times there are some things in our minds that have to get worked with a little bit, which is this transforming of the thinking. It's our thinking.

That's why I love the word "repent" - think differently. The more we can think and be in unity and the will of God the richer our life truly is.

**Nevertheless, afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit.** Just what I mentioned. In time you go through certain things, and we can learn from it. People in the world go through hardships and difficulties, but God isn't working with them to produce something, to produce a change in their thinking, a transformation that's on a spiritual plane in their thinking. We do. How blessed are we that something that's happening in us is something that has permanence? And what price can be given for such a thing? We don't have it.

**...and afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby.** It's how you live righteousness. It's that mind and being in unity with God, how we think. That's what we take with us. There is nothing else we take with us.

**Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.** So, there are times when we can feel that way on a spiritual plane. Sometimes maybe even physically, we just feel worn out, we feel down. Now, I hope I'm not talking to a crowd here that some have never felt that way. So, you understand where I'm coming from. There are times you've felt down. If you haven't, you will.

So, there are times. I remember the worst time I've ever had in that regard was the Apostasy because everything was being ripped away. What do you do? How do you do it? The most excruciating time of life far more than anything else. We go through things like that and sometimes it's just like, where is the strength, what do you do? You go through it and God blesses us; He helps us to go through those things. It's awesome and the peaceable fruit that follows.

It goes on to say, "To those who are exercised thereby." So, I love that expression too because exercise, doing something, doing what God shows us to do, we choose to do it. It's like this exercise; you do it and you get stronger.

**Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; so make straight paths for your feet.** That's what it's about. It's about walking the way we're supposed to

walk. It's about coming in unity and harmony and oneness with God, and when we're not, we're going to suffer, we're going to go through various things. The desire then is to be on a straight path.

**...make straight paths for your feet, otherwise, that which is lame will be turned out of the way.** Sometimes if we don't recognize the need for healing, the need for a change in our mind, we can go on in a certain direction, and the lame, spiritually, go by the wayside. We all need healing on a continual basis. It's not a one-time thing; it's a continual process that's taking place in the mind, the mind being healed. And without God, talk about lame; we have nothing, absolutely nothing without God.

**...but rather, let it be healed.** That should be our deep desire, that we want to go through this process and continue to go through this process of a healing on a spiritual plane that's taking place in the mind because the mind is screwed up. The carnal human mind, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" that emanates, that comes out of our being in the way we think, because it's about our thinking, is sick, and we're blessed for that to begin to be healed, a transformation to take place in our mind as God is creating something totally different inside of us to bring us into oneness with Him.

"But rather, let it be healed." So, that's a choice, to be healed. It's a choice to seek to be in unity and oneness with God, to choose God's way of life. We're constantly bombarded with choices in life and God has to be first, must be first.

**But follow peace with all.** That's a challenge because we're to be peacemakers. We're to be a family. We're to work out differences. We're to learn how to do that to those that are the closest to us. We're to learn how to do that within the Body, within the Church. There are things we have to do in order to have peace produced, in order for us to have love toward one another. That doesn't just happen.

We have things happen on a regular basis that challenge that in our lives spiritually as to how we get along, how we live. Are we striving to be peacemakers? Are we striving to have peace? Are we doing the things that God has told us to do in the first place, to have right thinking toward other people? A lot of that comes out of our judgment, how we judge. Sometimes we have to start there because that's where it starts, how we think toward others, how we see ourselves. So, a desire to be healed.

**Follow peace with everyone, and holiness...** That means so much more within the Church, in the environment of the Church. **...without which no one will see the Lord.** Powerful words. That's sermon after sermon after sermon in just verse 14 alone, of what it's saying there.

So again, how precious is that to us? Do we really see ourselves as Naaman did, seeing how ugly his leprosy was? Because leprosy, once you who haven't seen it go to the internet and

look at it, it really is an ugly thing when you talk about what it can do to skin, what it can do to the body, what it can do to appearance, for that which is seen in the face or the hands or the arms and so forth. It's bad.

We should see ourselves in that light for what is bad, for what is really ugly because it's ugly when compared to what God wants us to see, to His way of life. Human life, selfish life is ugly, ugly, despicably ugly, and evil. It really is. We are given the opportunity to be healed of that. God wants us to see that and think in the terms that Naaman did, but on a spiritual plane, on a continuing basis. Not just once in a while, but as a way of thinking, what He's offered us.

**1 Peter 2:24**—Speaking of Christ, of Joshua, **Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins,** being able to be dead to sins, to be able to be forgiven of sin, **should live unto righteousness,** that we can change and become something different.

**Through whose stripes you are healed.** Not past tense but on a continuing basis. A healing from God for us is something that's on a continuing basis in life.

"Through whose stripes you are healed." That past tense, bad, because it shouldn't be there. Because it's like when you're baptized that's it. No, to understand this properly we grasp and comprehend that we need forgiveness of sin on a continuing basis, over and over and over again in our life. That's a healing process. It's how we're healed on a spiritual plane.

**For you were as sheep going astray, but now have,** and the word "**returned**" is awkward here too, because it's not like we once had this and now we're returning to it. No, we've never had it until we're called. But now we're able to turn to God because of a calling that we've received.

**...but have now turned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our lives/your lives.** So again, that's a process. It's about a healing process that takes place that we're able to do that the world can't do that should be exceedingly precious to us. Awesome.

So, we can read, again, that physical example, and we should be able to make that clarity in our minds, of something that was incredible that happened to Naaman, but really learn the spiritual lesson from it for the Church, for us individually, and of the value that should mean to us. Like he did on a physical plane, how much more should we on a spiritual plane? Thank God regularly, continually for this process we're going through, for being called, for being able to get rid of our carnality, for being able to be healed, for having Joshua as our Passover. Every time we repent we should be able to be thankful to God that we're able to repent and be forgiven.

So, now continuing in the story of Naaman here going back to **2 Kings 5:17**—**So Naaman said, Then, if not, you won't receive these, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods but to the Eternal.** Now, this is a little awkward to understand what it's saying here, and especially coming back to it at this point.

I think it would be good just to go all the way back to verse 14. Let's just go back there and pick up the context again here because some of this is a little strangely translated if you will because they don't really understand it, what's being said in verse 17 anyway.

**Verse 14— So, he (Naaman) went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel.** This has importance when you understand what he was asking for with the earth.

**...except in Israel.** It had to do with their thinking about gods and so forth. **Now, therefore, please take a gift from your servant.**

Then it goes on to say, **But he (Elisha) said, As the Eternal lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing. Yet he (Naaman) urged him to take it, but he refused. So Naaman said, Then, if not,** in other words, if you won't receive it, won't receive the present, **please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth.** So, in other words, he's calling him his servant again here.

**Please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifices to other gods, but to the Eternal.** So, he had this concept on a very physical plane that if he had earth from Israel he could take it back to Syria with him and there he would worship on that earth to God, offer offerings or whatever it is, in his mind on a physical plane of something to do toward the Eternal God because he knew that God wasn't in Syria. He was convicted of that at this point. "He was down in Israel and I believe that He is God," and so his attitude of mind was totally different.

So, notice what else he has to say because he has very carnal human reasoning. So, again, Naaman acknowledged that there was no God except the God of Israel and he wanted to take some earth with him.

**Verse 18—Yet in this thing,** in what he's now getting ready to explain, that's how he's saying this to Elisha, **may the Eternal pardon your servant,** speaking of himself again here, **when my master,** in other words, the king of Syria, **goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon...** In other

words, I have to be with the king. It's expected of me to be with the king. I have to do this with the king, but it's not me, it's not my mind, so please pardon me of what I have to do here because it's not to the god he's worshipping. That's basically what he's saying. "So, please pardon me now and give me that pardon."

**...so when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Eternal please pardon your servant in this thing,** because he's making known it's not to them. It's not to the gods that he's worshipping.

**Then he said, Go in peace.** You know, what do you say on a physical carnal plane to a physical carnal human being who is not being worked, but you've got to hand it to him, he was convicted enough in his mind that he didn't want to offend the God of Israel for what he'd been given. Awesome. He didn't want to offend. **So, he departed from him a short distance.** We do have time I think to finish this. I want to complete this.

Notice what happens next. We've looked at this thing of healing, how he felt, lessons we can learn from it, but now this is a sick, sick, disgusting thing that took place that follows. On a spiritual plane, it's happened over and over and over again in God's Church through time because of carnal human nature.

**Verse 20—But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said...** Whether he said it within himself or perhaps to his servants who were standing there, we don't know, but this is his thinking, his mind. **Look, my master has spared Naaman the Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the Eternal lives, I will run after him and take something from him.** So, bringing God into the picture justifying himself that "Elisha wouldn't do it, but I can." That's pretty sick.

**So Gehazi pursued Naaman.** And you can ask yourself, what is the spiritual lesson here? **So Gehazi pursued Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? Then he said, All is well. My master has sent me...** Liar. Liar. Liar. Incredible, how far the human mind can go to get something it wants and start living a lie.

And whenever we at any time take something to ourselves that it's come from God and we try to raise ourselves up, which has happened in God's Church over and over and over again, of something that has not been given, it's this sick. It's pride. It's haughtiness. It's perverted. I hope you understand where I'm coming from, what I'm saying.

I've given so many examples of times past of things like this happening, times when people thought they ought to be up giving the sermons or a sermonette or leading songs or bringing the cookies, like I've talked about. People making a big deal out of doing something, bringing God into the picture like this is somehow something that raises someone up to do such things.

No, it isn't, and if anyone feels that they're wrong. We should never take or want to be seen by others for what we're doing in the sense of feeling better than or being lifted up by it, putting on a show. That's about self.

Gehazi was willing to take wealth to himself, wealth that didn't belong to him, that Elisha had already said no. He was giving all the honor to God Almighty, to the Eternal God. That should be the mind if it's right to be in God's Church; it shouldn't be a haughty thing. I know that it's not, speak it that way. But sometimes within the environment of the Church, it's easy to want to be or think we should be given something.

I think of people who have left God's Church because they become jealous of someone else's ordination because they thought they should be. I know of people who have made those comments, "I should have been ordained." "I should have been ordained to that. They shouldn't have been." I've had it come back to me that some have said, "Well, you really didn't know so-and-so then." It's like I'm the one who makes decisions of who's ordained. The reality is I never have been as far as I feel inside myself.

I look to God and ask God, and if something is brought to my mind and sometimes, sometimes it hasn't been for good. Sometimes it's been for people to learn from because the person is going to misuse it and God knows what individuals are going to use in the jobs they're given. So, I can lay hands upon someone or whatever it might be as God's servant, but sometimes people are to fulfill something else.

The man of sin was there for a purpose to fulfill something else. Ordained by different ones above him? Absolutely. From God to be there in that spot? Yes, but not as a blessing to God's people.

Sometimes things are done for our learning. I've seen that a lot in God's Church, especially through Laodicea. A lot of lessons learned. It comes from God. Things that are good and profitable, that last, they're always from God. Sometimes we go through things and learn things that, well, this is not from God, or it became because of certain decisions that people make it to a point where they begin to cut themselves off.

You know, individuals can be moving along quite well in God's Church and come to a point where something tests them and tries them, and something can enter inside them. I think of one individual that probably stands out more than any other in one respect, who was ordained in PKG, who when he saw another individual ordained to a higher rank, their friendship ended. They were very close.

That was the end for him because of that spirit because it was the same spirit of what Lucifer did. He became jealous of what God was going to do with Elohim, what he learned to a point, what God was going to have, a creation of human beings that were going to be offered



something greater, and he didn't agree with that, became jealous of it. The greatest in the angelic realm and he became jealous. From that moment he was gone.

And candidly, from the moment that individual did what he did, made his choices, he couldn't conquer it. He was conquered by it. He was gone. It took him a few years, but he was gone.

So, that's this spirit of Gehazi, the spirit of Lucifer, the spirit of lying, the spirit of getting something for self and not acknowledging or not even beginning to grasp where something came from, that it comes from the Eternal God and why Elisha did what he did, and then for him to say, "Well, my master told me to do this, to come and take something." So, let's read the rest of the story here.

That's it on a spiritual plane. Perverted. Sick. But a battle oftentimes we have to fight as human beings because pride of life, raising self up.

**My master sent me, saying, Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments. So, Naaman said, Please, take two talents.** "Not just the one but take two talents of silver." **So, he urged him—he didn't have to urge too much—so he urged him and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to the two servants.** So, there are the servants there. He's even lying about that. They didn't come out of Ephraim, they were with Gehazi. They came from the same place Gehazi was and they were pupils, and they came with him because they were influenced by him and basically serving him.

I think of how that's happened a lot in the Church, different ones who looked up to certain ones and began to pick up their traits that were wrong. So, here they are picking up the same traits as Gehazi and lying, because they're lying too. They know full well.

**And they carried them on ahead of him. And when he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand.** So, who was it for? Gehazi. It wasn't for the two. And so, they were a part of this. But what does this do for them? Do they get something out of it? You bet. From Gehazi. That's what they were looking for. Students, more recognition, "his special people," serving him. Anyway, some of these things have happened in times past and just makes you want to vomit.

**...took them from his hand and stored them away in the house. Then he let the men go, and they departed. Then he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, Where did you go, Gehazi?** Like if he didn't know. You know, he should have known how stupid this was, how foolish this was to lie like this and to do such a thing, but he didn't, and he was really stupid. He was the primary one that Elisha was working with.

History floods through my mind saying this because I think of what happened at headquarters. All these evangelists and people taking sides, people taking sides with Garner Ted because “Herbert is getting old, he’s about to die...” And so, they want to have someone there that they think is going to be the one that’s going to take over, and if it’s him they’re going to gravitate to him and kiss whatever. What expression could I use that would be okay? Anyway, brown nose is a good one, but it’s about the same area. I’m sorry... No, I’m not.

But those things happen in human life, and they should be seen as that stinking, that filthy, that dirty because human beings do these kinds of things. I think of all the things that happened out there at headquarters and all the things of those evangelists... not all of them. There were about four or five maybe. But the rest of them? Sick, sick, sick, because they did this kind of thing.

**So, Gehazi said, Your servant didn’t go anywhere.** You know, one lie leads to another. Isn’t that the way it is? It happens in God’s Church. One lie leads to another. You get yourself caught in something and until a person repents and seeks to make it right they just go farther and farther away because repentance has to be there or one cannot be right with God and can’t have God dwelling there.

**Verse 26—Then he said to him, Did not my heart go...** Now, the terminology here is a little awkward in the translation. **...when the man turned back from the chariot to meet you?** It’s like saying, “Was I not with you” but deep-felt here, “when this happened? I know when it happened. I know what you did.” It should have sent chills up and down his spine. It should have caused him to be so horrifyingly afraid. But, you know, it’s a carnal physical thing.

**Didn’t this happen...** he says, **Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing?** Is this what you want? Is this the time for that? Is this right before you? **...olive groves and vineyards?** So, why did he say that? Because they knew what the king had done before, what king Ahab had done when he wanted this particular piece of land and all that he went through because someone else had to be killed in order for it to happen, by Jezebel. So, going back they already had this knowledge of things that had happened in the past.

**...vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female...?** “Is this what you want, you want more and so you’re willing to lie and deceive and take to yourself what is of God?” in essence.

**Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever. Whew! Then he went out of his presence leprous, as white as snow.**

Now, this is a very physical thing. Wouldn’t it be an incredible thing if every time someone got lifted up they just got leprosy, you know, and wanted to be acknowledged and seen by others as being worked with by God or whatever comes into the human mind sometimes? Anyway, we learn of things to be on guard against, wrong thinking.

So again here, I hope we're able to see the importance of spiritual lessons of physical things that happened a long, long time ago, and again to understand that those things happened and were recorded the way they were so that in the Church we can learn them. Because people in the Millennium are going to be told the very same stories with the same spiritual examples given to them of what not to do and how that God Almighty, we're here because of His mercy, His kindness, His love, and not because of us and how great we are, or to take something that doesn't belong to us.

With that, we'll continue on next Sabbath in the same series.