

God's Tithes and Offerings, Pt. 1

Ronald Weinland

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Today we're going to begin a new series on the subject that we need reminded of from time to time as it touches much about the beginning stages of being able to come into a right relationship with God. It's very much about that. It starts when we come to a point of first coming into contact with the Church. It's one of the first things that people have to address. And so again, from time to time, we have to go back and revisit it.

This is to actually begin in honesty and truth, this process, it tries us in that, whether we're going to be truthful to God, honest to God, and whether or not we're addressing things properly in our life and whether we can continue in a calling. Or sometimes, frankly, people just don't get a hold of it, and they have a battle with it for years and years and years.

So, it is something that needs to be addressed early on in your life, in one's life. This concerns the subject of tithing and giving of offerings to God. Because that's something very dear to us as we come into a relationship in God's Church when we're first called, because it tries us, it tests us. Because just as in—I'm sure it's over here, very much the same as it is in the US and other places—that a lot of people have to live from paycheque to paycheque. It's that way. We're stretched out, rent is so high, food is so high and getting higher, and so those kinds of things tend to try people.

Especially if they're working seven days a week and come to a point where they realize they can't work on one day of the week anymore. And then to come to find out not only that, but God requires, commands a tithe, and seven times in a year a Holy Day offering to be given to Him. And those things can tend to try people because, again, that value is very close to us in what we spend and how we spend it. And so, it tries us a lot and some people don't fare too well in that, and a lot have left the Church over it.

So again here, something we're going to address in this particular series, something we haven't addressed for about three years. We addressed it throughout the month of July up into August in 2021 so we're about three years down the line and it's a good time to revisit this.

We're going to actually begin this series by quoting some things or going through some of the exact same things that we began to address in that sermon series, a few scriptures to start. And candidly, you can't go into the subject without addressing a lot of the same ones anyway because of the subject matter. It's very specific.

So, today we're going to begin in Deuteronomy 14. Deuteronomy is the second giving of the law after God had given the law to the Israelites over that period of nearly forty years. Then toward the end began

to remind them again how they had fared (which wasn't all that well) and began to give that to them again. That's what Deuteronomy basically means, "the second giving of God's law."

And so, things concerning the statutes and the judgments and so forth, Moses began to address again, and adding to what was given before as far as what was written.

So, in **Deuteronomy 14:22**, very specific here even though it goes right into second tithe in a moment. In the beginning, it's addressing all tithes. So, it says, **You shall truly tithe**. Well, again here this is an expression, it's just an expression, a definition here really of first and second tithe, and at that particular time, it also included third, which I'm not going to spend the time of going into today. We've done it before in the past.

And so again here, we are to truly tithe before God. It's a given. **You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain**, So again, whatever tithes we're to give to God, it's very clear that we're to do it on all the increase of what we have. And that was an agrarian society, very much so as far as what they were getting ready to do when they went into the promised land.

So, God was preparing them for that and He said, **You are to tithe**, in that respect, **of your grain of the fields that it produces year by year**. And we understand that then, that society and the world has changed much since that time and other kinds of businesses and trade and so forth began to develop and grow. And understanding here, it's about increase. So, whatever increase we're blessed to have on this earth and the work we're able to do, God says we're to tithe on it.

Then Moses focuses squarely upon second tithe as he continues on here in **verse 23—You shall eat before the Eternal your God, in the place where He chooses**. So, very clearly here we understand that's an expression that has to do with Holy Days, where God chooses to place His name. And we understand today as well, things that were a little bit different back then, obviously. They were still moving from one area to another, and they had built the tabernacle in the wilderness, and then finally settled in time in Jerusalem. And so, very clear where God placed His name.

But in time it was for the Church as well to understand wherever God chooses to place His name. And how does He do that? By the government He's established within the Church. That's how He does it. It's a matter of God didn't come down and tell Herbert Armstrong that they should have a Feast site in Penticton or the Poconos or the Lake of the Ozarks or Lake Tahoe, or anything of that nature. It's a matter that God gave that administration to the church and so the church had to decide what was best for service to the Church, for the people in the Church. And so, that's where God's name was. In that respect, as far as people came together, and even more so because the desire of God's people is to come together at that time, that's where they're going to be, so you don't want to be someplace else.

And God's in us. God lives His life in us. Awesome, to understand those things.

So, **In the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and of your new wine and of your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and of your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Eternal your God always.** So again here, indeed there is a factor of fear here, but the word means more than that. We understand that. But fear is something that we should have if we think of straying away from it or not obeying what God says. We should fear not to obey God. We should fear, especially in God's Church, to be cut off from God.

The Israelites learned that on a physical plane. We have to learn it on a spiritual plane. We don't want to be cut off from God's holy spirit, from Him and His Son living and dwelling within us. That should be the deepest desire, one of the deepest desires we have, because without that what do we have? We don't have anything! If we don't have God, what do we have?

And so, we're blessed to have God dwelling within us and we desire that. And so, we cry out for that day by day. And so, to not obey God, we understand what that means. We're going to be cut off from God. And yet I'm really flabbergasted sometimes, dumbfounded by how many, especially in the past, and especially it's come to the surface probably in the last twelve years or so even more so how many have not done this faithfully before God.

And you think, can't we understand some of the most basic of... If we can't do this what are we doing spiritually? Because this is a pretty simple thing. Ten percent. It's easy to figure. It's easy to understand what God says about it. But it seems to try people from time to time and it's still trying some. I know some are having battles with it. I know some who haven't been faithful with it. It's just a matter of time. They're being given opportunity to repent and change. Whether they do or whether they don't, that's on them.

Still blows my mind after all that's been said about it, especially in the past few years. All that's been said about it and still there are still some out there that still don't do it faithfully. And so, my message to you is "Just leave. Just leave God's Church. Just leave being around God's Church. You're just postponing the inevitable, and it's not long from now. Save me the heartache and the hardship of having to address those kinds of things."

So, sometimes people do and sometimes people listen to that, and other times they don't, and they continue to live a lie because of friendships and so forth that they... That's what they know. You know, after you've been around God's Church for many, many years and some of, obviously, your closest friends in life are in God's Church, if that's how it began. But it doesn't always stay that way because you can't have true fellowship, true friendship if you're not truthful to God.

So again here, it starts with a fear, but it should develop into and grow into a real reverence, an awe, of thankfulness, a gratitude for God. It's amazing to me how often in various things as far as what we're to live, it might be something as simple as various kinds of moderation in life we learn, we learn through

the Church and God teaches us those things. And sometimes people don't learn that until they begin doing it. And then as they do it they begin to see it.

There are certain things we have to do and have to live in order to come to really understand it. We might know it. We might know that's what the Church says or that's what God tells us to do, but to really see it and understand it and say and have that "Ah ha," moment, "Now, I understand it."

You know, certain things about dress. There are some times that people have gone through that, various kinds of clothing or whatever, that sometimes certain things are addressed. And until a person really begins to practice that and do what the Church guides and gives, then they can begin to see it because God will work with them. By obeying it, by living it, and then you can begin to see it. To me, it's an amazing process, an awesome process.

And that's the way it is with tithing. The more you do it, the more you begin to learn from it, it teaches other things. And one of the greatest things of all is that everything... We can know it, but to see it, each one of us, to grasp hold of it, that God has given everything. Everything belongs to God. He's given us everything. He's given us life and the beauty of life, of a creation that is awesome. And to be part of that, to understand this all belongs to God, everything—Everything!—and what do we do with it?

I look at the world today and think, "What a sick, sick, filthy world we live in!" The way human beings think today! We've surpassed the times of Noah. It's gotten worse than what it was back then and why God did what He did at that time. The ability to sin, the depth of sin, the weirdness of sin that people delve into today, of things that can only be accomplished because of technology that they couldn't do then. And yet people are doing all kinds of unimaginable, weird things out there.

I just look forward to Christ's return to stop it all, to stop the poisoning of the human mind. There are times that you just... Can that mind in a new age, if it lives on into the Millennium period even, or is resurrected in the... Can that mind even be worked with it's so polluted and so distorted? Are people so set?

Because sometimes that happens. People become so set in evil they will never change; they will never want God's way of life. Because of what they've experienced, that's what they want! Even if their life ends up in death. Even if they believe that, they want it their way. Human beings, that kind of... That mind that is filled with selfishness is truly far more evil sometimes than what we can grasp. But we experience it as human beings, what it's like to have an evil mind. "Lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life" – it is evil because it's the same mind of Satan. Exact same mind. Selfishness.

And God has blessed us to experience that. That's a blessing. Because there is no other way to ever come to a point where you could really see, know, and understand it, and hate it, and loathe it, and choose in spirit and in truth God and God's way of life because you conquer, because you overcome the evil. That's a beautiful thing to understand.

And so, one of the dilemmas of six thousand years is we had to be made this way so we would experience it. And then when God calls us and draws us we can make a true choice, "I don't..." Because you have to have God's spirit to be able to see that and then make that kind of a choice. The world can't make it. It's impossible. It requires God's spirit.

So again here, tithing, giving of offerings, it's a recognition of something you can grow in. By doing it we come to understand because it's a spiritual thing that works in the mind where in time we begin to honor and glorify God more and more, become more thankful to God for everything we have, to understand how richly blessed we are.

It's almost impossible for us sometimes to grasp how blessed we are in this age. Two hundred years ago, four hundred years ago, and on back you think, you look at what people didn't have and you look what we have today because of what God has given mankind at the end of this period, of the technology in the last two hundred years, that it mushrooms and it changes so fast now it's almost a pain trying to keep up with it. It's going so quickly, new things coming along. AI. You think...

When I was gone for three years (secluded), and I came back and had to learn things about an iPhone or other phones that are out there that do the same thing, the technology, it had so changed so much just in that three years time it took me a little while to get up to speed. Because, you see, we couldn't have those things. We weren't supposed to have them. Most everyone did, but I didn't.

Everything is God's and He gives it, He wants to share it with us. And He just requires a certain thing back out of all that so we can learn that principle, so it can begin to be etched in up here in ways that we really couldn't come to grasp it in the same way. That's a spiritual thing of how God has made this mind and how He works with this mind.

So again, one of the primary reasons this series has been inspired to be given to God's Church is not only because there have been those who have continued to refuse to tithe faithfully before God in first tithe, but God's made it clear that far too many are not doing so faithfully with second tithe. Because that's God's. It's God's. Everything is God's. But that is sanctified and holy. So is first tithe sanctified and holy directly by God.

The other, the rest of what we have, it's not sanctified. It's for us to use ever how we want to. But when something is sanctified by God for holy use and purpose we have to take note of that. And so is second tithe. So, we've kind of trailed away a little bit from some of that as far as understanding in many cases. But some strayed away from it. And we have to use it in a certain way, the way God tells us to do it.

Yes, it's ours to use, but it's to use in a very specific manner. And if we don't do it in that specific manner, well, that's another story.

Let's turn over to Malachi. Now, thankfully, the majority handle this exceptionally well. We can always learn and grow in some of these things, just like in understanding of what we're talking about, about the

practice of tithing and the practice of giving offerings, of how God works with the mind, and we learn things in a magnified way. Just like the awe toward God, the appreciation that much more that God... everything is God's. And when you have that perspective and you think that way on a regular basis that's a powerful thing in one's life if we truly think that way, because it puts things, again, in the right place and we're able to deal with the world and things around us in a far better way.

So, **Malachi 3:1—Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me.** Beautiful scriptures, you know. Again, when some of these things, when we talk about the Elijah to come, some things that people haven't understood through time, and yet Christ made it very clear that there was one that was there already, speaking of John the Baptist, and he was preparing the way for Christ's first coming. And thousands of people were baptized by John.

It was a baptism of repentance. We've talked about that recently. And yet it was about a matter of preparing for the things that were to take place toward the very end when Christ was, actually at the period of time when Christ was going to be coming back into Jerusalem. And not only that, but what was to take place after Pentecost, that there were some out of that that God began to work with. Not all but there were quite a few in that very beginning that God began to work with as far as the Church was concerned.

So, he said, **and he shall prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to...** It's "the temple". **...shall suddenly come to the temple.** So again here, physical analogy as part, but the greater part is that which is spiritual, of what's being built, of what God has been building and working with for the last six thousand years, but this time here, only after four thousand.

...the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. So again, the very one through whom the primary message comes and is about is about the Messiah. It's about how God's going to accomplish it all. And again, about Christ and those things that God is going to do and how we can become a part and enter into a covenant that is unique, that's only possible through Christ.

So again, beautiful scriptures here.

...in whom you delight. Behold, He shall come, says the Eternal of hosts. **But who may abide the day of His coming?** Now, this is a little bit awkward here in the translation because in how it's stated in some of the translations, "who may abide the day of his coming," because it literally means "abide in or abide with," and that's... **Who can abide in or within the day of His coming?** So, that's true today for the Church and it's true for the world.

Who is going to be able to continue to dwell in, live in that period of time? And as we see the things that are getting ready to take place in the world? I have news up here. I don't know if I'm going to have time to read some more of it today, but things are just continuing to ramp up more and more and more. And

there's one I'm going to read right now. Just, a matter of fact, there it is. (Greg?) sent this here this past week. I gather it's from a Greek publication, right?

Anyway, it just says: "**Serbian President A. Vucic: "We will have a world war in 3-4 months – We control what we have in oil, flour, sugar" – Video of the statements**"¹ "The President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, gave a long interview to the Swiss weekly magazine [And this is a good one for me as well.] "Weltwoche"" [Something like that. It's probably German. It's close. I have no idea. But it's a weekly magazine.] "...during which he revealed that Serbia controls the reserves of oil, flour, sugar as in 3-4 months we will have a world war."

Some people are thinking that way. You think, if certain world leaders are thinking that way and they feel like they have to take a major step like that, what is it that they see, what is it that they feel, what is it they know perhaps? And so, there is this sense of what is going on in Europe.

Europe is changing fast! I hope you all understand this. It's not just a matter of a cycle you're going through. It's a matter that because of where we are and because of what's happening in Ukraine, what's happening with Russia, and the battles that are going on there, literal battles, but how people are thinking.

And so, there is that concern. People have it more and more. Leaders have it more and more here of what's coming down the pike and how are you going to address it? And so, minds are trying to grapple with all this. How are we going to address this? Because you have the United States saying this over there and then something that wants to be done here. And even within this, there is not agreement fully, but some are being pushed into more of an agreement now because they're being pinched into it, if you will. It's being pressed into it because of everything that's going on around.

It's a crazy world right now. It's a scary world. And it seems like everyone just wants to ratchet things up more and more and get worse and worse in things that are being said out here as far as world leaders and so forth. Like absolutely just going into it blind, waving a sword moving forward. Absolute insanity!

So, **Who can abide the day of His coming?** Well, that's something that we've been addressing in sermons. "Who is going to abide in the day of His coming?" Because sadly, there are some in the environment of God's Church, who they are not going to. Some have already gone by the wayside. They're not going to. That's a promise. And I don't know if some just don't believe it, to think that you can rob from God and you're not going to ... You're going to give up what? Living on into a new age. After all you've done and sacrificed in times past, why would you...why change now? What insane thinking.

¹ <https://warnews247.gr/diethnh/balkania/serbos-proedros-a-boutsits-tha-exoume-pagkosmio-polemo-se-3-4-mhnes-elegxoume-ti-exoume-se-petrelaio-aleuri-zaxarh-deite-to-binteo-me-tis-dhlwseis/>

How do you deal with an unsound mind? Sometimes people try to understand an unsound mind. And there is no understanding in it. It's just a matter of selfishness and what human beings will do when we're selfish. We can't think right. Look how unsound the world is today. Some of the crazy things that are going on out there, you shake your head at times and think, where did that come from? How did they ever get to that point in life that they could think that way? And some try to understand it. Forget it; you can't understand insanity, foolishness, selfishness.

Well, you can to a point of understanding the motivations and so forth, but what they've gone through to become what they are, another matter.

So again, these kinds of things astound me. And then in the world, we understand what's getting ready to happen. How many are going to come through all this? Just in the world alone? Well, the population is going to be whittled down a lot. Not a little, a lot. A lot. The majority aren't coming through this in the world.

But who may/will be yet abiding the day of His coming? That's the proper translation. **Who shall stand or who shall be standing/who will be standing when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire.** And then it goes on to say, **And like a launderers' soap. He shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver.** Now, so much of this, again, is about the Church. And about preparing the word as well for God's government, for His government to come, for Christ to rule as King of kings.

And so, there are those things that have to be cleansed and gotten rid of first, that which is so far gone that they can't be worked with to start off the Millennial period properly without great chaos and confusion and hardship. So, that's going to be whittled down to size so it can be dealt with, with minds that are far more humble than they ever have been, that are willing to listen more.

Because even within the mix of all that there are still going to be some who don't. God makes it very clear. We can expect the reality that some aren't going to go up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles year by year. And because of that God says what He's going to do, and He says it for a reason. They're going to have hardships economically and whatever else, health conditions, whatever it might be, whether it be disease, we don't know. But they're going to have some horrible hardships that the rest of the world isn't going to experience. And then He says if they don't come up He's just going to... He's going to destroy them.

You think, here the Millennium gets started, Christ is ruler, 144,000 with him, tremendous power that's exercising government around the earth, and there are going to be those who are so determined that they're not going to accept what they're being told, they still want what they had before.

Some of the religions of this world? I'm not just talking about Christianity. There are some within that who aren't going to want to change. But you start trailing off into some of the other beliefs that are spin-

offs of some of those things and then other really weird things out there, and there are some who just aren't going to want to change from that. It's a choice, isn't it? Not a good one if you want to live.

He shall purify the children of Levi. So again, very much on a spiritual plane about the Church and about those who are going to go into a new age, and those who are being prepared for that new age.

That's why I love scriptures like this in... I'm just going to read this. You don't need to go there. I'm going to go there and continue on in Malachi in a moment. In **1 Peter 2:9** it says, **But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.** What an awesome thing to understand about our calling. It's what God says, we're a royal priesthood. Far more important than anything within the Levites ever had, far more important.

...a holy nation, a special people, so that you should show forth the praises of Him. In other words, in our lives the virtues, the way of God should live through us toward one another and toward the world in how we're living. **...who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.**

Malachi 3:3—He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. He shall purify the children of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Eternal an offering in righteousness. So, that's been a process that's been ongoing within the Church, but all the more so as we get closer to the end here in what's getting ready to take place.

Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Eternal, as in the days of old, as in the former years. So I will come near you in judgment; I will be swift or be quick or a quick witness against the sorcerers. So again here, spiritually for the Church, this would be any who push upon others their own ideas. And that's the way it's been, and within the Church, God has allowed various things to exist, and it tries and tests people as to what they're going to listen to, what they're going to accept from others, and just been an ongoing process. But anyway.

So, in **verse 5** it says, **So I will come near to you,** in other words, He's going to approach you, approach us **with judgment.** And we're in a time of judgment, and more than ever before. Not just in the Church, but in the world, because this is that period of judgment that God has spoken of throughout the Old Testament. This one and the last Hundred years are both spoken of in a powerful way where God is going to execute judgment. We live in that time. Incredible to understand that.

I will be swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers. In other words, those that are unfaithful to God and His word. **...against false swearers.** Those who don't keep their own word or those who don't keep the truth. Same thing.

Against those who oppress the hireling of wages, in other words, those who oppress others. That's what it's about spiritually. Those who are oppressive to others. **...the widow, the fatherless, and who turn to...** And too often this is just read in a physical plane. It's not physical; it's spiritual. It's an attitude of mind. It's a way of thinking about others, how we treat others, how we think toward others, to those

who have needs, to those who are weak, in a weak state, whatever it might be at a moment in time in their life.

...and those who do not fear me, says the Eternal of hosts. Verse 6— For I am the Eternal, I do not change; therefore you children of Jacob... Having to do with that leads to becoming Israel, in that respect. And so, we understand that in the environment of the Church and the way it's been in the last two thousand years and what it's getting ready to be for all the world to be a part of this.

Therefore, you children of Jacob are not consumed. Because of God's plan. That's what it's talking about. God has a plan. He has a plan for Israel, spiritual Israel. He has worked with very patiently for two thousand years a lot of people, and the majority have turned against Him.

Even from the days of your fathers, you have gone away from My ordinances. And you think, it's easier to see how physical Israel did some of these things because they didn't have God's spirit. But for God's Church? For people over two thousand years, to grasp and comprehend that the majority of people who have ever been called have turned against what they have been called to? That to me is astounding to understand that. And this is what's being addressed. And that's worse than what Israel ever did because we're begotten of God's spirit. We have no excuses. We, the Church through time, through the past two thousand years.

Even from the days of your fathers, you've gone away from My ordinances, and have not kept them. Return to Me. So, it's a simple thing. We just... It's so simple. We just repent. God says that's what we have to do. We have to acknowledge, and accept our own frailties, responsibilities for things we have done wrong and just repent of it before God. He says that's what we have to do. Because we want to change. And God will help us and bless us in that. It's beautiful.

...and I will return to you. So, anytime anyone goes astray, does something that, whatever it might be that begins to cut them off or has cut them off from God, all we have to do is humble ourselves and repent and hate it, and loathe that kind of thinking that would separate us from God and His promises and His plan.

...and have not kept them. Return unto Me and I will return unto you, says the Eternal of hosts. But you have said, Wherein shall we return? It's like, "What am I doing wrong?" "What have I done wrong?" That's why we're to examine ourselves. We always have selfish nature. We always have things to repent of. We always have things to learn about ourselves and our thinking.

That's why I spoke of last Sabbath (which you haven't heard yet) if you can begin, if you can get in here, not just the outward actual sin that's taken place. Because that's where we begin to address certain things. But when you begin to work in here, when you begin to understand this is where it began and you didn't stop it, you weren't able to say no, you weren't able to quit, and your mind just kept dwelling

on certain things that allowed you to do or you did allow yourself to do what was wrong before God that turned into than the actual sin physically.

But the sin begins up here in the thinking. And that's where you have to really... That's where you grow the most. That's where you can grow the most. That's where you can ... That's what transforming of the mind is all about, a desire to think differently. And for that to take place then is a beautiful thing. But rather than just dealing with the outcome of something, not tithing, not saving or doing what we should with second tithe, or giving offerings to God, or ignoring those things, or many other kinds of sins. (Which I went into last Sabbath, and you'll hear later.)

But again, whatever sin it might be get it up here first. That's where you have to get to. Why? Why do we say or do some of the things we do? Why do we judge in the way we do sometimes? This is where you hit it and address it. And you can't do it yourself. You have to cry out to God, "Help me! Help me to see my own thinking. Help me to understand what it is in my thinking that leads to the next step of blurting something out, of saying something that isn't right and proper," rather than dealing with the aftermath – because that's what we do sometimes. Oftentimes, that's where we start. We deal with the aftermath of the sin, after it's already caused the problems and the hurt and the pain and the sorrow and the suffering.

If you can deal with it up here, that's what the goal is, to deal with it in the mind and ask God for help to do so, and He'll bless you in it. And that's where it needs to be addressed.

So, this is about attitudes and ways of thinking, and that's what is being addressed here in Malachi when it talks about some of these things. It's all in how we think, and especially how we think toward others and about others.

And so then it comes down and says here very plainly, **Will a person rob God? But you have robbed Me. But you say, Wherein have we robbed You?** This is one of the major things that have led to other sins within the Church, because if someone isn't faithful in this area and they won't repent of that then they go off on other areas as well and they can't control things anymore because God's not there to help them. They're on their own.

When we get cut off from God then it's so easy to have other sin come into our lives. That's a horrible position to be in. And I've seen that happen to so many people in the environment of God's Church. I think of one individual who was used mightily in the Church that no one would have ever thought that of him. But he began to fool around with, play around with, think differently toward tithing and it began to affect his mind. And then it began to affect his life because he was lying, lying to God and yet putting on a show in the sense of speaking before God's people on occasion when given the opportunity, but having something else going on up here about something so basic. And if you begin to think in that pattern it leads to other things that take you farther and farther and farther away from the trunk of the tree.

So again, when it says these things understand that this has happened a lot in God's Church. And that's sad. That's pathetic.

But he says, **Yet you have robbed Me.** So, there are those within the Church over the past two thousand years who have robbed God. I think of Ananias and Saphira when it all began in a certain way. They put on like, they acted like they'd given everything. And they didn't have to; it makes it very clear it wasn't required of them. But they wanted others to believe that this is what they'd done because they wanted to be looked up to. "Look what I've done." And they lied to God. They lied to the ministry. They lied to the Church. And they were called out on it very early on to strike a fear within the Church that you don't, you can't do this in God's Church.

So, it was addressed very early on in the Church. Lie to God? Who's going to get by lying to God? Brought it out very clearly because both of them were drug out dead out of the presence of the Church. And if that'd happened more through time there would probably be a lot more fear. But it shouldn't have to be learned that way. We should be able to learn from the examples of the past and understand, and then we make the choices to obey God because we want to do what's right. And as a whole the Body of Christ today, we do.

We've come a long, long way. I guess we could say we've been refined a lot. But there is still some in there that it is not refined yet. It still hasn't been scooped off the top. It's getting ready to be, but it hasn't been fully cleansed off the top when it's heated up and the dross comes to the surface so that it can be taken off the top and separated from that which is pure. That's what God is doing to the Church.

So, God brings those things out, so we are to address those things. Is there anything that any of us could address in this area? Well, we're going to look at this as we go through it and there are probably some things that each one of us can make a little bit better in the sense of our thinking toward maybe offerings and how we think about it. Because it's a matter that you need to think about it, because it's between you and God in what we do, and it's the attitude then we do it. Because God, He doesn't want us just to go through the motions of it. He wants us to think about it. And we'll get into that later on.

And second tithe, we want to be cautious and careful about it because we recognize... in how we handle it. You know, to handle something of God's that's set apart for holy use and purpose and is our responsibility? First, we have no say over; you send it in. Now, I have to have that responsibility. I have to think in those terms. And then when it comes to second, that's our responsibility then that God has given each one of us individually what we do and how we do it.

And so, it has to do with our thinking and the thinking process. And so again there, how do we do it? How do we do it? Well, I don't want to get into it yet.

So, as we go through this sermon today my point being is we all have some refining we can probably do in this area. I mean, I don't see why not, because we don't know everything, and we don't see

everything sometimes. We think we do but the reality is spiritually in the mind and how we think we can always do better. Because it's about our attitude and our thinking toward God that counts in all this.

Turn over to Deuteronomy 15. The world goes through the motions when it comes to their religion, their beliefs, and it's not a spiritual thing in a relationship with God. It's purely of their own desire, their own thinking, their own mind, their own traits, their own thinking as to what makes them feel better. And it's so far from what God does in His Church and works with on a spiritual plane in our minds. It's night and day.

And that's what God's concerned with. It's the mind. It's how we think about it all. It's not just the physical routine. It's not just the writing of the cheque and sending it in each month or whatever it is, or having the bank, whatever, transfers or whatever that you do, people do. It's not just that, it's about our thinking and what we're learning from the process, and how we think about it that God's concerned with.

Deuteronomy 15:19—All the firstling males that come of your herd and of your flock you shall sanctify unto the Eternal your God. Set it apart for holy use and purpose. So, He's showing here the process of an attitude. But they couldn't fully grasp and comprehend, especially as we do within the Church on a spiritual plane what it means to be set apart for holy use and purpose and seeing God in the picture. So again, theirs was just a physical routine.

And so, He used these words for them but we're to learn from it. They couldn't grasp it. It was just a physical routine. Every year when they came into the Feast of Tabernacles or the various Feasts they had on the Holy Days and they had offerings that went up before God and so forth, it was all very physical. It was a physical routine of things that they did. And same thing as what it might be when somebody goes down the middle of a church row with this thing swinging back and forth and smoke is coming out of it and you wonder, "What on earth does that mean?" or "What are they doing?" And it's just a routine that people get used to.

And then sometimes they have these big ole long things on a handle and it's a basket and everybody is supposed to put something in it. It's just a routine they go through and so people are expected, and you learn as a child or young person that you throw something into it because that's what you do. But a relationship with God? Like what we have? It's not there. It's just a physical routine of worship, their worship and what makes them feel good.

Going to confession? People who do that? They go into this little booth, and someone is behind this little screen on the other side and you're going to tell what you did – maybe, maybe part of it. I don't know. How far do people go in some of those things in telling what's really true that they've done? And if they do, then they tell them to count so many beads and say so many things, repeat it over and over again. And you know what? They feel a little bit better about themselves because it's their carnal way of appeasing some of the guilt. But it's not a spiritual thing like we have with God when we know we're

cleansed and clear and God hears us. That relationship is night and day with what they go through physically.

I hope that makes sense, what we're talking about. People just go through the motions of things, and sometimes in the Church of God people can get into a rut and go through the motions of things, repeating certain things that make them feel better. Want to make sure we're not doing that. We want to make sure that our mind and our thinking is what it's all about and why we do what we do and how we do it before God.

Verse 19—All the firstling males that come of your herd and of your flocks you shall sanctify until the Eternal your God. You shall do no work with the firstlings of your bullock, nor shear the firstlings of your sheep. You shall eat it before the Eternal your God year by year in the place which the Eternal shall choose. So again, it's this matter of that which is agrarian in that respect, as with second tithe with us and what we understand.

...you and your household. But if there is any blemish in them, as being lame or blind or having any ill blemish, you shall not offer/sacrifice it unto the Eternal your God. So again, a responsibility to make sure that what's given to God is pure, is the best.

Verse 22—You shall eat it within your gates; the unclean, in other words, that lame or blemished that are not clean to offer up before God. **...the unclean, just as with the clean.** So again here, this is something else that is being said here. You're not to bring it in, in other words, you're to do this, you can have it, you can use it for that, and it was to be taken care of in a certain way to pick out something else that was better – in other words, of the herd. But of these, you can eat. In other words, just because it was counted as that group it's not something you can't eat. You can but it's not sanctified, it's not holy before God. It's not to be looked at as holy before God because it's not the best. And so again, it had to do with the attitude of thinking.

I remember when we were down in Egypt at one point, in Cairo on a trip. It was at the time where, I don't know if it was Ramadan period or what it was, but during that period of time, they were out killing animals. They had carts being pulled by horses or donkeys at times and huge things that just... Carts that were going down the streets sometimes in Cairo there. You'd come up behind them in a cab or whatever it might be, and they were filled with carcasses. And you'd see people walking around with these white garbs, things on, just bloodied; children, I guess, being taught how to do the same thing.

And I had a conversation with someone at some point there, and I don't remember it fully, but what I did take from it was that a lot of these, that which they gave to others – they do a lot of this then and they give it to others – it's their way of giving to others who don't have as much as they have. But they don't give the good ones. They give the ones that are blemished and the ones that are bad, the lambs and the calves and whatever it is that they offered up and cut up and so forth. And I thought, what a contrast to

what God said should have been done and how they were supposed to approach some of these things, that in how you offered it in your thinking.

Anyway, we're to think differently about those kinds of things. And again, that goes to relationships and how we think and how we think about people even. So, it's about a matter of our thinking and our minds toward God, and that's what he's addressing in some of this.

So, as it goes through here it talks about you shall eat it within your gates, but not in a place where God chose to place His name. So, that's the distinction. You can eat it at home, in your community, but don't use it as something that's sanctified or put it across as being sanctified and set apart because God says nothing like that is to be sanctified and set apart for holy use and purpose.

...you shall eat it within your gates, the unclean, just as with the clean, as the roebuck and as the hart.

In other words, these are clean animals, but they can't be offered up in sacrifices to God. They can't be sanctified for something like that. They're wild, you can go out and kill them and so forth, and you can eat them at your home. And he said you can do the same thing with an animal that is lame or whatever, but it's not to be offered up to God, just like the roebuck or the deer or whatever it might be.

Only you shall not eat the blood of it as well, as it says here, **but you shall pour it upon the ground as water.**

So again, just because an animal is clean to eat doesn't mean it's worthy or right to be offered up before God. And that's the principle. So, it's a matter of teaching some very basic principles here. It's about a thinking toward God, to see God as God Almighty, to esteem, to honor God. And you don't want to give something that is less, you know, than of the best to God. And that's what it's bringing out here. And so, it has to do with our thinking.

That's why I was struck by what they did down in Cairo there. It wasn't really the best of thinking and what God has written in scripture.

And I'm struck too by how you can go all the way back, just like Cain and Abel. There are a lot of people in times past who really haven't understood within the Church this distinction of what happened back there and why Abel's offering was accepted by God and Cain's wasn't. It was because of what was in the mind. It was the attitude behind it all. It was the thinking and the purpose and the motivation of it that made the biggest distinction here between the two. Abel's was received because of how he did it, his mind, his attitude toward God. Cain wasn't the same mind at all.

And so again, something that happened very early on should be something that should carry through time, and especially within God's Church, that this is what God is concerned about. He's concerned with the mind, with our thinking, with how we think toward... He knows how we think toward Him. That's something that sometimes is very hard for us to grasp and comprehend spiritually because literally one

of our biggest areas of test in this or revelation of this as to how we think is in a relationship with others within the Church and how we think about one another.

Because, you see, everyone in God's Church is set apart for holy use and purpose. Everyone belongs to God. Not in the world yet. Now, they're God's in the sense that God has full control, but He's let them go off and do whatever they want to do. But for us, we're set apart for holy use and purpose. We're sanctified.

And the more we can grasp that the more we are able to grasp how we're to think about one another, how we're to treat one another, because you're God's. And if we don't treat one another properly and think right toward one another the reality is we're not thinking right toward God.

And you can't bypass that relationship any more than sometimes people think or have thought in times past that they can do something different than what the ministry has told them or what the Church has instructed and given, and whatever it might be because they can choose that and decide that. And if it's that easy to skip the ministry and it's just God and them, God has given them special understanding...

We've had that up to recent times, and I fear it's still a little bit in the Church in certain spots, that some have this mindset that God gives them certain understanding and insight into certain things that the Church doesn't have, that hasn't been given to the Church. And those are very, very dangerous things. Or that they see various things or know various things. And it's like, that's dealing with fire in a way that most can't even begin to comprehend.

And so, if we can do that we can do the other a whole lot easier in the sense of not seeing one another as God's people. Do you understand the difference there? God says we should be able to see and understand who His servants are that He has set within the Church and have proper awe and respect in the sense of God. Not because of the person. We're all human beings. We're all a part of the Body of Christ. But it's a matter of... (Maybe "all" wasn't the right word.) But it is toward God, that He's given us that, that we're able to have that, that we're able to have a structure that works with us, that is organized to help us. Because without that God doesn't function any other way.

And so, we're blessed to have that in a very cleansed way today compared to what happened to the scattered Church because there are so many out there, that they have no idea what's going on to this day. And how blessed are we that we do? We're incredibly blessed that God's brought each one of us together, to have a fellowship together, that we have a structure that God works through to lead and guide and direct us, to help us. He's given us so many truths sometimes it just boggles my mind when I think about them, the truths that God has given to us preparing the way for Christ's coming.

That's what it's about. Preparing the world. Preparing the Church first for that new age and what's going to be taught from the get-go, making many things right that haven't been fully established, and now they're established within the Church. It's a beautiful thing. Sometimes we miss that.

So again, we can think we're right toward God and if we're not right toward one another within the Body—sometimes it's so hard for people to grasp—you're not right with God. You can't skip the relationships that He's given us to have within the Church and somehow think we have this communication that we're able to have and we're okay with God and we're right with God. And if we're not right with one another, nonsensical. This is where it all begins. So, God gives us that within the Church, relationships, fellowship. And so, how we think about one... And if we don't think well toward one another and we're very harsh and judgmental toward one another and we don't love one another and we don't want to see each other...

We, above everything else, we should want to see every—Every!—person come through this. That's my desire – to see every one of you come through this. And yet I know within the Church that's not going to happen because it's a matter of obedience to God. And some aren't obeying God just in this area of tithing, as I'm talking about here. And if they're not doing that?

I think of somebody of recent time here that aggravates the tar out of me because they've been having this battle for year and year, year after year after year, and playing this game back and forth. And I'm not going to get into because it would give away who it is in time and I'm not going to go through that.

But they continue having this battle to the point it's taking them farther and farther and farther away from the Church. It's in their ballpark. I'm not going to go and ask them for their tax return. Say, "I know you're lying. You're lying through your teeth. You're not doing what you're supposed to be doing." That's not my responsibility. It's your responsibility to be truthful to God. And if you're not going to be truthful to God you're just going to get weaker and weaker. I see it. I know it. It's going to be obvious.

The amount you send in, you're living on that, huh. Whew! I wish everybody in the Church could do that. We'd have a heyday. See, there are certain amounts that human beings can live off of paying rent and food and so forth, and if a tithe reflects that you don't even have enough food to eat then something is screwy. Doesn't take a great mathematician to figure some of that out. I hope you all understand what I'm saying.

So, I think of this individual and I think, you've been playing this game year after year after year. Why are you doing this? Why are you doing this to yourself? Because I sit back, I see it, and I'm just watching you get weaker and weaker. Is it my responsibility to go to them and tell them? I've told them. I've told them in 2021. Telling them again in 2024. I mentioned it many times in between. It's up to us to hear, to listen, to respond to God. It's not up to me to...

Think of the individual who at one time (thought he was funny), a minister out in Texas, the first one I worked under as an assistant, associate, whatever it was, and he told the congregation, he said, "Now, when we come to visit you, Mr. Weinland and myself, I'll stay in here and talking to you in counseling with you, but I'm going to have him go around in your kitchens to see who has white sugar in their

cabinets.” Course back then it was a type of thing that some people had this thing that, “You can’t have white sugar. It’s got to be brown.” Think, ah, okay.

Anyway, this is just one of many things he did. But he thought it was funny, but people took him as being serious, he’s going to come around and I’m going to go around looking in people’s kitchen cabinets. Anyway, that’s akin to a little bit of what I’m talking about here when it comes to things that people can rob from God when it comes to tithes. It’s not my responsibility to go around and see if I can get people’s bank accounts or if I can look at your tax returns. Think, thankfully, we’re not required to do that. You think, what would be the purpose? You think, either we do it in spirit and truth or we just suffer. And sadly, we’ve always had within the Church people who have chosen to suffer. I hate that.

So, all these things we’re going through, it’s about a thinking toward God. Everything belongs to God, and we’re so blessed with what we have. We are so rich. And what’s even above and beyond that is the truth that’s far beyond anything we have physical. It’s the truth that gives us our wealth.

Physical things, that’s a part of life, that’s a part of rent, payments, food, gas, whatever it might be. Those things we work with, we have to juggle, and we look to God for help in those things as well in life, and especially when we’re going through various trials, whatever it might be at work and so forth.

But God blesses us mightily in those things through time and over time. Doesn’t mean that we get everything all at once but in time we begin to see more and more how much God has blessed us with what we do have. But far above and beyond that is to grasp the spiritual aspects of it, the truth. There is nothing more wealthy than to have the mind of God, His word, His truth, His life in you up here. Because in time the physical part is all gone. In time it doesn’t matter anymore, it’s not going to be around. The jobs, the money, the rent, the food, that all passes.

And this little blurb in time that is so narrow, it is so small, but this is where we learn that determines whether or not we’re going to be able to continue on forever and forever and forever. And it’s what’s up here that’s valuable. It’s what takes place in the mind. It’s the mind that we have. And that comes from God. Transforming of the mind, to be at one with Him, to be able to have that kind of thinking in all things, there is nothing, nothing more that is greater. But it’s so hard for us as human beings sometimes to lay hold on that and grasp that with all of our being and realize the physical part is just a minor thing to get there. So, why not do it faithfully and do it well, and do it right while we have the chance?

Malachi 1:6—A child honors their father, and a servant their master. If I then am your Father, where is My honor? I think about this at times, at how we think toward God, about God in our life, how much we love God and the fullness of life He’s given us to experience, the richness of life He’s given us to experience, how we think toward Him. Whether or not we really have that desire deep down inside of us to have that heart like David had where God says, “He’s a man after My own heart.” If we think that way, if we live that way in our prayers and our relationship toward God, that He knows how much we want

Him or how much we're lacking in that want. And that should be above and beyond everything. Above everything I want God. I want my Father. I want that life living in me. I want that mind.

...and if I am a master, where is my fear? Where is the respect? Sometimes that's just shown within the Church toward one another or toward the ministry, or whatever it might be. It's how we think. But it gets deeper than that because it's about God. The reason we do it is because of God, how we think about one another; that should be the motivation above anything else.

So, Where is My honor? If I am a master, where is My fear?... Where is My fear, asks the Eternal of hosts to you priests, who despise or show contempt to My name. And yet you say, In what way have we despised (in other words, shown contempt to) Your name? You offer defiled food on My altar, but say, In what way have we defiled You? By saying, The table of the Eternal is contemptible.

Now, it's speaking of something here that was done on a physical plane, but they couldn't grasp at all what is said here in Malachi, because it's spiritual. It's about the attitude of mind, and how we think toward God. And for them in those offerings, or whatever it might have been, they didn't have the ability to have a right mind toward God. They didn't have God's holy spirit or access to it.

And so, He's explaining something here on a very physical plane that explains or that expresses something that's really deep in the mind. It's spiritual. Now, we are able to read this on a spiritual plane and understand it individually more so spiritually and what it is that God desires, what it is that we're to look for.

So, He goes on to say, "You have offered defiled food on My altar but say, In what have we defiled you. By saying, The table of the Eternal is contemptible." In other words, again here, have not shown honor to the wealth that God has given from His table. So, how do we think toward God then? Do we grasp what God has given to us? Everything that we have that comes from God.

"The table of the Lord, contemptible?" It all belongs to God. What is it that we give an offering, sacrifice, have an animal that we bring in the way God says to do it? So, it goes back to what we grasp and see about what God's placed before us. It's all His.

Verse 8—So, when you offer the blind as a sacrifice... So, again here, various things happened that they did anyway, maimed, whatever it might be. **Is that not evil?** So, it's saying, "Look what's up here, that kind of thinking to be willing to do that." But again, they couldn't understand that.

Is that not evil? So, when you offer the lame and sick, is that not evil? Their whole heart wasn't in it. Their mind and attitude wasn't fully in God and pleasing and honoring God, that God sees all things and knows all things, and knows exactly what you're doing. But we have that ability to know that, to know that God knows everything that's up here. He knows it all so why try to hide anything from Him? Why try to put on a show or be different within the midst of His congregation, His people? He knows!

So, it's a matter of being truthful. And if we're not truthful before God we're not being truthful to one another by any means either. That's an absolute. So, it's spiritual.

Is that not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably? asks the Eternal of hosts. So, it's like, which it comes down to, human beings, they in that particular case, couldn't really see God. There was a certain belief, and certain things they went through in rituals, certainly wanted God when they came down to having a battle or a war or when they wanted to have rain and they wanted to have plenty of productivity in crops. And those are the kinds of things that people live by.

I mean, look what people will do to try to improve those things, have the winter solstice or whatever it might be and worship various things, the sun and all the other things that go along with that. It's just gobbledegook. And that's what it was with them in many respects, except they saw the fruit of certain things that God had done with them at different times so there is a certain belief there. But not a spiritual one; not a real relationship with God.

And so it was in what He's explaining to them, they couldn't even see. Because it wasn't for them to understand all this. It's for us. We can see it. We can understand it. We can understand what it means to truly see God, to truly honor God, to truly magnify God, to truly be thankful to God for everything we have and to understand then how blessed we really are. To be able to do what we do, it's awesome!

Verse 9—But earnestly seek God's favor, for He is merciful to us. Because this is being done by your hands will He accept you favorably, says the Eternal of host? Who among you would shut the doors, in other words, prevent the offering of what you will, of what you want from being given?

Yes, would you not kindle a fire on My altar for nothing? I have no pleasure in you, says the Eternal of hosts. So, nor will I accept any offering from your hands. For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name is to be great among the people. So again here, that which God was teaching them that they couldn't really grasp, is that the ability for God's name to truly be great, for God to be great it comes from up here. It's something we have to believe and see and respond to. And motivated then to do everything we do because of that relationship, that we want to honor God, we want to please God, we want to be a man/a woman after God's own heart.

That's a beautiful thing. And if that's deep down inside of us, you know what, we would never dream of disobeying God. We would fight when our carnal human nature has lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or the pride of life. And we would see those things more clearly and hate them with all of our being. And so, the more we do indeed hate those things the more we magnify God because we want to please God, we want to honor God. We want to be in God's Family. Doesn't come easy for human beings because you've got to fight this.

So, **from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name is to be great among the people. In every place incense is offered to My name, is as a pure offering** (clean, acceptable offering). **My name shall be...** And so for us, it can be. We understand what incense is about. It's about prayer, our prayer life in a relationship with God.

For My name shall be great among the people, says the Eternal of hosts. So, what an awesome thing that God is doing then within the Church, if we grasp that, is He's giving us the impregnation of His holy spirit, He's transforming the way we think as we yield to that and want that and cry out for that, to where we're becoming something different than what we were a year ago, a month ago. We're growing farther and farther away from the carnal part and drawing closer to God. That's the desire. That's the goal. That's the battle and the work that we seek to be a part of our life because we truly want to honor God. We love God.

We should be able to say that, "I love You, Almighty, Eternal Father. I love Your Son. I love Your people. And I want to love You more and I want to love Your people more, and I want to love Christ more. Help me grow in that!" That's what we should cry out to God for, and He'll help us in that. Beautiful! What else is greater?

So, "in every place that incense is offered." We grow in that. Isn't that an amazing thing that takes place in us? We change, we grow, and we learn to glorify and honor God more in our life. It's a beautiful thing. It's what God offers us. He wants that.

"For My name shall be great among the people." So, God says that's what it's going to be. So, as we grow, His name is becoming great among... Greater! It's greater this year than it was last year within the Body of Christ—it is!—as we grow and become stronger, as a whole. And the dross? It's going aside. It's going away individually and collectively.

For My name shall be great among the people, says the Eternal of hosts. But then He goes back to this, says, **But you profane it when you say**, in other words, by what one is doing, **The table of the Eternal is defiled** (polluted). It shows a total lack of ability to really see something – something we definitely don't want to do on a spiritual plane. Because the table that God has laid before us is rich, is mighty, is powerful, is beautiful. All the truths, all we see and know and understand, the ability to change and grow on a spiritual plane, the ability among so very few on earth in the last six thousand years, to have the impregnation of God's holy spirit in the mind to where we're growing as children in Elohim.

I love the example Herbert Armstrong gave. It's like being in the womb but not yet born. But we're growing and being developed in there. And that's what God is doing with us. And it's an awesome thing. But so very few have ever... And it's hard for us to wrap our minds around that sometimes, of how awesome that is. They have to wait until the end of the thousand years, the rest of the world through time, to have such an opportunity.

We're blessed above all people of the earth. To understand that and the reality and truth that it is sometimes pretty tough for us. It's kind of hard because it's spiritual. But the more we're growing the more we're able to drink in of that, the more we're able to be inspired, moved, and motivated by that, the more it actually fuels itself to wanting to please God even more and loving God more.

But you profane it when you say, The table of the Eternal is defiled (polluted). And its fruit, its food, is contemptible. What a horrible thing! They did it on a physical plane. And the point being is... And they couldn't understand any of that as a whole spiritually by any measure at all. But if we can see it spiritually then we're very blessed because then we know where our battles are, we know what we're to strive for, what we're to accomplish.

Verse 13—You also say, in other words, by what one is doing, Oh, what a weariness! Even you sneer at it, says the Eternal of hosts. As you bring the plunder of the lame and the sick. Thus, in this manner, you bring an offering! Sometimes that's what's so sad that's happened within the Church, that if someone lets down or begins to back away from God, from the Church, even from fellowship with one another, though these opportunities are wonderful, they're awesome that we're given. And especially in considering what's happened to the Church since the Apostasy and what God has still blessed us as a whole to have.

And yet some don't have the same opportunities, maybe because of health or whatever it might be, and age and things that are happening to us because we're getting a whole lot older, as a whole within the Church. Especially that that went through the Apostasy. And some are dying because we've got a lot of... It's almost... This December it'll be thirty years; thirty years since the Apostasy. That's astounding!

I was forty-five at the Apostasy. My wife was thirty-eight at the Apostasy. Incredible! Just been transferred to a different Church to serve over. Seven years before that we were transferred up to Erie, Pennsylvania. I was thirty-eight then! She was thirty-one. Look what's happened to us! Just kidding. The grey and the aches and pains sometimes. Just kidding. We go through a process of getting older and it's not a fun process but it's a reality of life.

What an awesome thing that God has placed before us, what we can have. But to think it's been thirty years and what we have? It's really beautiful what God has given us as a Church. The strength, the growth, awesome!

"You also say, Oh, what a weariness!" So, I was making comment there that it's a horrible thing when people go through a process of not having or not living, not able to receive of the kinds of things that we're talking about here. As far as an attitude of mind when people begin to back away from the Church, the things within the Church, they actually become a burden to people sometimes. What a horrible thing that something within the Church can become a burden. Or going to services or going to a Holy Day or paying tithes. It becomes a burden. The things that we go through and if they become wearisome or

burdensome or we're just tired of doing it, what a horrible thing. And yet it happens. And we have to be careful of that.

...says, the Eternal of hosts, as you bring the plunder of the lame and the sick. Thus or in this manner you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand? says the Eternal. But cursed be the deceiver who has in his flock a male, and takes a vow, but sacrifices to the Eternal what is blemished.

So, the point being is we have to be on top. We have to make sure that we're sharp. We have to make sure that we're striving to do things before God spiritually, on a spiritual plane, not as they did on a physical plane. But again, up here being sharp and desiring to give the very best to God of ourselves and of our time, whatever it might be. It's an attitude of mind.

So, He goes on to say, **Yet I am a great King, says the Eternal of hosts, and My name is to be feared among the people.**

So again, we're going through a series here (I don't have time for the other news articles), but I brought up here one, two, three, four, five, five pages of news articles just from this past week of this, just about what's happening in Europe and what's happening in Ukraine and Russia and the preparedness and the crazy talk going on about nuclear war. Every week this gets stronger and stronger and stronger. And it should scare the tar in one regard out of us to realize this stuff is just around the corner and it's coming head-on toward us.

We need to make sure we're readied, and we have a right relationship with God then because this is what it's all about. If our relationship is right with God we don't have a thing in the world to fear, not a thing.