

TEMPLE OF GOD- PART 2

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Moses built a tabernacle in the wilderness. It was built so carefully that God gave very explicit directions and a pattern in which it was to be built. Only high quality ingredients went into that. There were a lot of sacrifices involved. A lot of blood and gore in that sense, or blood and guts, however you want to term it. Many animal sacrifices continually with that tabernacle. I bring that point up at this juncture to bring out another point. That is in Worldwide years ago; I think it became a glorious to be a deacon, an elder, or a minister. Those were jobs that were sought after. Many people who sought those jobs set themselves up as such teachers later on when they had an opportunity. Just the opposite really is the case. How many would volunteer to go up and sacrifice a few hundred animals? You have to string them up, you have to kill them, you have to bleed them and let the blood drip out all over the ground and fly as they convulse in the death throws. You get the blood all over you, all over the alter, and if you are standing you get on wherever you are. Then the blood runs off the alter. You have to eviscerate them, that is gut them. I will use those terms because when you are in it and doing it, it is not a very pleasant thing. If you don't do it very carefully and you puncture the stomach then you get smells that are really bad too. They did this perhaps all day long in some cases. It was not a pretty picture. They had to hang the meat on big hooks, meat hooks they call it on one place. I think that was designed, in part, by God so that the

Levitical priesthood, i.e. the ministry today, not that it is the Levitical priesthood, I don't mean that, the priesthood is changed, but it is somewhat the same function is what I am driving at. The function is to serve and help and to work with whatever God has put there to work with. Whether it be sacrifices, or with people that is the object. It is not a glory job. It is a gory job in that sense. It had its roots in the Levitical priesthood and the sacrificing of animals because of sin. God put that tabernacle there as a beautifully patterned and built edifice to show God's glory. The Holy of Holies was inside, representing God Himself, which the High Priest could only go in once a year after he had totally cleansed himself. Then he went in with great trepidation. Enclosed in that tent, albeit a very fancy tent, was the Holy of Holies representing God where He would dwell. That could only be approached with great trepidation. In other words, we have to be careful how we approach God. We have a lot of religions out there, a lot of people going to church who have this thought of God in their heart or a thought of God perhaps in their mind, but do they really understand how Holy God is in contrast to mankind. Do we really think, "God is just like me"? God isn't like us. There is a vast chasm between deity and human beings. We have a long way to go to even begin to be like God. Now it is our goal and purpose in life to become God. I don't want us to get away from that or be discouraged because that is the purpose. That is why we are here. But, I don't want us playing church like so many

churches do because that is all they are is a group of people getting together to fellowship with each other, but God really isn't very much in the picture. We are here to be different than the rest of the world. We are not to be like the world at all. The temple of God has to be different than any other temple on earth. Remember Romans 12:2, "Be you not conformed to this world, but be you transformed." We started out "Joe Blow" human being here and we are being transformed into something different. We are not here to hear good words and go home and come back the same next week, as we are this week. We are to be totally transformed into a different type of being. Why is it that we as human beings tend to come to have a level of comfort or a status quo? It might be a little better than the world. We might not lie as much as the world. We might not cheat as much as the world. We might not be quite as materialistic as the world. We might not be quite as lustful as the world. We might not be quite as envious as the world. We may not be quite as bad of backbiters as the world. We are a little bit above the world maybe. Or are we? Whatever level of comfort we have come to enjoy in our lives is not the level that God lives and thinks on. We have to become transformed, different than we ever were. This was a different kind of tabernacle that God built. It had nothing but quality ingredients and quality craftsmanship. God gave the skill to make it that way, as we read last week. He gave certain ones special skills to be able to build in a right way. Cannot we equate that to I Corinthians 12, where He says He gives gifts? He doesn't give gifts just to the ministry brethren. It says gifts to all men. God gives them to build. Are we asking for those gifts? Are we seeking those gifts?

I mean in a right way, not as a think to have an honorable office where someone might have a specific of knowledge or of prophecy or of healing or whatever gift God might give. God does not give those things if we want them in a wrong way. God only gives those things when we have gotten rid of ourselves to the point that He can work through us. As long as we are doing something for personal gratification, to make a show, to be somebody or however you want to term it. God simply will not give those things. We wondered, where are those gifts? God cannot give them and will not give them to people who are prideful. When we have become humble and meek God will give us the kind of craftsmanship and the kind of gifts that are necessary. I say necessary, necessary to build a temple, but we have to put self out of the picture. Is it any wonder God tore down a tabernacle that was built here at the end time. There was an awful lot vanity, envy and pride and office seeking for the wrong reasons. Maybe I'm getting a little ahead of the story here, but I wanted to make the point that the ministry is not a glory position. The only time God can use the ministry is when the ministry becomes humble and meek and not seeking anything on this earth except to yield to God and do His service. To do what can be done for His people. If we are in it for personal glory, if we are in for position, we might give good sermons, we might be good at organization, we might be good at patting widows on the head, holding babies or whatever. There are ministers across this country, in the Church and in other churches who have certain people skills, maybe can speak well, but does the Spirit of God move through them, that is the question? It is a question that

we have to all ask ourselves, any of you who might be elders or teachers or sermonettes givers or whatever. Are you like a clogged artery? Am I like a clogged artery that God's Spirit cannot move through? Or do we yield and become humble and meek and ready to serve and give in whatever God bids and then His Spirit and His power moves through. So, human skills are not nearly so important as the Spirit of God moving through. Of course, the Spirit of God can impart certain skills as well, as it did in working with gold, silver etc. to build the tabernacle. Those men did not have that skill. It says that God gave them skill to do that. So we face the same situation today. Will God give us the skill if we are given the opportunity to build a temple? I say if, we will get into that a little more as we go on.

Now, let's go to today and pick this up where we left off. I was in Leviticus 16, but I want to go to Numbers 1. It is amazing how much there is back here about all of this, the tabernacle and the service of it, the priesthood and everything that went with it. Here I want to pick it up in Verse 50. I'm just picking out a few little highlights.

“But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.” (Numbers 1:50)

It was called the Tabernacle of Testimony. We will talk more about that later. They were to set up their tents around that tabernacle to care for it to

look after it, to be sure it wasn't vandalized or graffiti put on it. They were to be there for whatever need there might be. I have heard of ministers in the Church recently who are unwilling to go across town to anoint someone. They would send a cloth across town. The Church is the Temple of God isn't today? Is that camping about it? Is that taking care of it? Is that looking after it in every way? I guess they say, Oh, boy I have something going on here, whatever it might be, and I don't want to drive across town, so I'll just sent an anointed cloth. I don't think so.

“And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.” (Numbers 1:51)

Those things were not even to be looked upon or touched. There were certain ones assigned to do that. Anyone else who looked upon it would be put to death. We will get to Hebrews 13 probably later on, where it says that no one except people, truly baptized and converted have any right to the alter at which we worship. God is going to put people to death who try to destroy God's temple, His tabernacle in the end time. The parallels are all there. It is a fearful to come before the living God, as Paul said in Hebrews. A fearful thing and yet we some times take it for granted, don't we? We can come here; I didn't as I drove up today. I didn't fear to come in here. I didn't fear to pick up a hymnal and sing songs to God. Maybe I'm not quite right in the head yet. Maybe I should come here with a great sense of trepidation because each and every one of you is an important piece and part of the temple, the tabernacle today. Those

pieces have to be treated very very carefully, lovingly, gently. They also have to be chipped and shaped to fit in the temple of God. It is a fearful thing.

I have done a little bit of hammering with a chisel either on steel and on masonry. I don't know that I am particularly skilled at it. When you give me a hammer and chisel things will come apart, but they may not look like art. If we are to be the children of God hadn't we better be very careful with hammer and chisel, lest we make big gouges and big holes and knock pieces that should be there or knock too much off or not enough off. You give must of us a hammer and chisel and say make a square block to go in this building and what would you have? Most of us, I doubt, could even get it halfway square. It would have gouges, holes, chips and everything else in it. I could imagine something you and I would build with hand tools and try to make a building out of it like that out of just plain rock. It has to be done with skill and care. So, when we approach the Church of God and each individual person here in the Church of God, then we have to be very careful how we handle it. Only those qualified can even be involved. If anyone else comes around, they have to be put to death. They have to either become a part of what is going on or they cannot be there at all. Those who are there had better be very careful how they treat others and for that matter themselves. Love your neighbor as much as yourself, not necessarily more, but as much as.

“And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts.

53 But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.” (Numbers 1:52-53)

Great care needs to be given to any tabernacle or temple of God as a principal. We are talking about an ancient building here, a portable building that went about. God is the same yesterday, today and forever and however He went about dealing with that tabernacle, He would go about dealing with any other tabernacle in the future. The principal is there. We will see that as we get to the New Testament. This principal is brought forward. I cannot be denied.

Numbers 1-11 go through all kinds of various things about the tabernacle and how it was to be treated, how it was to be taken care of. I'm not going to go through all of that. I don't want to belabor the point here about the care that was taken. We could go through perhaps and draw a lot of spiritual analogies out of this, but let's let it suffice, for the moment, about there. We will see a couple more things. One in Numbers 17, I want to address this one.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.”

3 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.”

A stick, a dry stick, a rod that represented the house. This is right after a plague, the plague of Korah. Korah being slammed into the ground and his family and all those that were with him. There was dissension, there was murmuring, and there were all kinds of upheaval within Israel at that time. It wasn't all settled by the death of Korah. There were still problems. So, God is going to resolve the question of who is in charge here. Verse 4:

“4 And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

5 And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.” (Numbers 17:1-5)

When we murmur against people within Israel, within spiritual Israel, it is an offense before God. He didn't like the murmuring coming up to Him. They weren't specifically murmuring against God at this point like they had coming across the Red Sea. They were murmuring about the leadership and God didn't like the sound of that either. This isn't going to be a sermon about authority because I have been hearing murmuring about the leadership in our group. People try to read things into something. All I'm trying to do is make some spiritual principals here. If there is a problem, let's hear that, but I don't know that there is. All I am doing is

reading some things here about what God did and how He did it. He is going to do some of those things again. I don't know if He will do these specific ones again, but He is going to do some of these things again to show where He is working to the end time Church and to the world. Many scriptures tell us that.

“And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

7 And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness.”

God is going to create a witness here that He is God and a witness as to who He was going to work through at that time.

“8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.”

That is an intriguing thing to me. He just took this piece of wood, these sticks, laid twelve of them in there and came back in the next morning and one of them had limbs, leaves and blossoms and perhaps even almonds. Perhaps it happened even as he watched. That will make your hair go every different direction wouldn't it, to see that happen?

“9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod.

10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not." (Numbers 17:6-10)

God didn't want to kill Korah. He wanted Korah to change his attitude. The rebels that remained, God didn't want to kill, God wanted to show, I'm working through Aaron and if you will all listen to what Aaron has to say you will be OK. But, if you continue to murmur and say there is this guy, or this guy or some other guy, then they would be in trouble because God didn't like to hear that murmuring.

"And Moses did so: as the LORD commanded him, so did he.

12 And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish.

13 Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the LORD shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?" (Numbers 17:11-13)

This scared them because they knew their attitudes were not right. They felt they were really in trouble. Do we look at our sins, at our faults, at our problems, at our difficulties in that same light? Or have we sort of learned to live with the sin? Israel has sort of learned to live with the situation and they could murmur, they could complain, they could backbite, they could do anything they wanted whenever they wanted it seemed, but God didn't like that. When they saw that rod bud and grow almonds it scared them. There really is a God there. That is like us in a way isn't it? There for a while we will have a great

conception of God and needing to do and then we sort of slack off and then we have a sort of personal revival again and then we slack off over and over again it seems. Something wakes u p to the fact that there really is a live being up there; He isn't a figment of the imagination of some kind. There is a God there.

We have gotten way off base haven't we in this present era? So many people now have trashed Herbert Armstrong gave us the truth. God showed by how He used the man that He was working with the man. But, we found flaws in him and murmured against him, so many have and ignored what God did through the man. We went following off after something else. Did that mean that he was perfect? No more than Moses was, no more than Aaron was, but God used them. God said, I will use Aaron and you had better pay attention to that or you will be in trouble.

Notice Jeremiah 1 in connection with this budding rod. It is interesting that the almond tree budded out and bloomed first among all the trees.

"Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

12 Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it." (Jeremiah 1:11-12)

In other words it could have been some other plant that blooms later in the spring, but God was telling Jeremiah this thing is going to come soon. I want you to see that this is an "almond rod". It will not tarry. It will hasten. Things will happen quicker than you think they will

perhaps. It is an early warning of an early destruction of Israel. Then He showed him a seething pot in Verse 13 and said that destruction will come out of the North. So, Jeremiah doesn't get very far into his message before God says there is going to be a destruction come and it is going to come early. It is going to come quick. It is not going to tarry, not going to wait long as Habakkuk said. It will not tarry, it will not wait; it will come. You may think it is taking a long time. That is the point in Habakkuk, but it will come quickly and it will probably take us in amazement when it does come. How many of us thought when the World Trade Center thing happened that it was an everyday thing? Did we say, it's just an everyday thing, turn that off, and let's get on with life? No, we were all agog weren't we? We were amazed; we were emotionally over wrought, excited wondering what is coming next? What is this all about? To most Americans, it seemed we were impervious to trouble. Yet, now we have seen that it can happen so quickly. When all these things break loose in this world, one day, when God is ready, it will still take people by surprise in spite of all these warnings that it will be early, that it will come quickly. I hope it does not take us unawares. I hope that we have everything done that needs to be done ahead of time. God says there is no many among us who knows how long in Isaiah. We don't know how long we have to build a temple. We don't know how long we have to get our temple personally built, do we? These things could wrap up very quickly and take us by surprise or they may go on a few years. We don't know. But, we do know we have a job to do and that it has to be done right, it has to be done well because that is the way God lays the

pattern out back here. We need to stand in fear of God and in fear of not doing the job right. There are many parables Christ gave which indicate that if people didn't do what He assigned them to do there would be trouble. Remember the talents, the pounds and various ones of the parables. They weren't increased; they didn't get the job done. We have a job to do. How are we going to do it and how quickly will we get the work done? They were to take extremely good care of this tabernacle. The ministry was to camp about it. That lays a very heavy burden upon any who would be teachers. They will receive a greater condemnation remember? A heavier judgment, yet everybody wants to teach. I tell you it scares me brethren. I didn't come here and walk in scared, but it often scares me when I think about standing up on my hind legs and talking to God's people. Did I do it with the right attitude? Did I do it with the right intensity, with the right strength and yet with the love, kindness, gentleness and all the things that God is? The problem and reason that I fear is that I'm not everything God is at all. I have so far to go. Each and every one of us is in that same boat. So, there should be fear in us, a healthy fear and perhaps it should be fear of death as well. I don't mean just awe, but fear of death. We don't preach hell fire and brimstone and try to scare people into salvation in that sense, but they put people death back here if they even looked upon things they weren't supposed to see.

Now, He calls it the Tabernacle of Witnesses or Witness. Let's go to Isaiah 43. Let's go to Verse 7,

“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my

glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

Are you called by God’s Name? Yes, you are. So am I, we all are.

“8 Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things?...”

Who can show what God has done?

“let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.”

How many people right now on this earth could come forward and tell you where God is in the world today? How many could tell you what happened in Worldwide and where God was working there and how He worked and what He did? How many are even left who were there to see it, who could tell you? A lot of them now have really nasty attitudes about it. They say, God wasn’t there, I’m not there any more, God is over here in this charismatic meeting and we are jumping up and down and praying in a circle. They have departed; they aren’t there. Yet, they were called by God’s name. How many witnesses are left that God is God? Verse 10,

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.

12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.” (Isa 43:11-12)

When was there no strange god among us?

So, we had a Tabernacle of Witness and now we have a body of people today called by God’s name who are His witnesses. There will be two designated to do a specific witness, but all of us, every last one of us, are His witnesses that He is God. Those who have remained faithful in the greater Church of God are the only witnesses on earth that God is God. We are the only ones who know God at all and we don’t know Him as well as we should. We have a very very heavy responsibility to camp about His tabernacle as His witnesses, to stand before the Tabernacle of Witness as God’s witnesses. Can the world look at us and know that God is God? Can the world even much tell the difference or discern a difference between God’s people and people out in the world who are religious? What have we done that would make us stand out as a witness of the true God as opposed to false gods that all these churches follow? Have we been transformed enough, are we so different from them that people would notice? How is God’s temple different than any other temple around? That needs some thought that needs a lot of thought. I am posing a question here. I’m not going to try to answer it all today, but it is something we need to think on in every aspect of our lives. We need to look at it and say, is this a quality piece that God would have in His

temple? Is this part of my character, that which God would preserve for His temple? Is it something He has shaped and fitted to go into His temple? We need to understand the standards of God. We can go on thinking we are OK. But, we need to scrutinize ourselves very carefully because we are being judged by God right now. We are the only witnesses He has on earth. From the time this Tabernacle of Witness built there has been somewhat of a witness about God. The holy prophets, the early New Testament Church, that which remained of Sabbath keepers perhaps through the dark ages, the middle ages and now an end time church as a final witness. In a way, we are sort of the most important witness, aren't we? The greatest witness comes right at the end before God utterly destroys human culture and civilization as it is today. How much do we still resemble the culture around us in any and every part of our life? How much differentiation is there between our rod and the other rods? I mean there was an awful differentiation between those other 11 rods and Aaron's rod, wasn't there? It was clear for all Israel to see, those are just sticks, but this is a live almond rod and it just sprang out today. A vast difference between that one and the other eleven. It was a witness to all Israel. If we are to be God's witnesses, somehow we must be a little different than the others. Am I making sense here? Does there have to be a difference between us and them for us to tell? Now if Moses had brought all those 12 out and they had all looked the same as they did yesterday and He said, That's the one, they would have said, I can't see any difference. They all look the same to me, how do you know that's the one? But, when it suddenly sprouted and grew

almonds over night; it was quite a startling revelation. Some of these things have to happen again in such a way that people can know the difference.

Let's go on to I Kings 8. Before going there, remember before when I talked about how Aaron had to wear the sign on his forehead that said, "Holiness to the Lord"? Aren't you glad you don't have to wear one of those? How would you like to go down the streets of Kanab, Chicago or Denver or wherever you might be with a sign on your forehead that said, "Holiness to the Eternal"? Do you feel like you are fit to wear it for one thing? Wouldn't you be a little bit embarrassed? Maybe we ought to make up a bunch of those and wear them for about a week, just for the fun of it. We could just wear them around town. "Holiness to the Eternal"? How about going to your job with one of those on and see how long you last or how long before they put you in a padded room? He had to wear that wherever he went.

Should not our lives attest "Holiness to the Eternal"? I think back at off color stories I used to listen to. Somebody would start telling one on the job and I might sometimes get a little nervous if I didn't like it too well. But, I would kind of laugh along with them. I mean I didn't want to stick out as being a sour puss. There are a lot of things that we sort of go along with or let slide. They should be able to tell a difference, not by our mouth necessarily, but by the way we live and the way we act.

I Kings 8:1,

"Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in

Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

3 And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

5 And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.” (1 Kings 8:1-5)

Dozens, hundreds of animals being sacrificed as the ark of the congregation came. David had had it brought and now Solomon, his son, was bringing it, moving it again to the temple he had built. They were sacrificing sheep and oxen. This was a very important thing. When something exciting and important happened they started killing animals. That is unusual isn't it? I wonder what the gentiles if they were looking on would have thought. Perhaps, here they are bringing their tabernacle out and everybody is sacrificing all these animals, blood pouring all over the ground. This was really strange, but this was the ark of the witness of God. Some of the things they did seem sort of strange to some of the people around. Some of the things we do seem sort of strange don't they? It

seems strange to people when we ask in the restaurant, does this have pig in it? They say, Oh no, no it's pork. They don't know the difference. We meet on Saturday, which seems strange to most people. There are some things there that make us different. I imagine we are under scrutiny right here in this little town that those of you who are here are living in because we are a group of now around 70 people, when we are all here, in a small town of Mormons. They are going to notice. Do you think they don't all know that we are here by now? You bet they do. They know we have different beliefs than they have. But, the contrast, I don't think is as great as it ought to be in a lot of ways. We always sort of want to fit in and conform, because we don't want to be looked upon as strange. I think a lot of the happened in the Worldwide Church of God. Remember we used to sort of tone it down. We wouldn't come and say, I'm a minister of God. We were instructed, from headquarters, to go out and say, I'm a representative of Ambassador College. We sort of tried to hide the fact we were a church. Hide the fact of who we were. We tried to make the gospel such a way that it was an educational program as opposed to preaching Christ and Him crucified. That used to frustrate me a great deal. As the same time, I sort of liked the protection, because it didn't make stand out and feel different. It allowed me to conform to a certain degree. Were we ashamed of the Gospel of Christ? Were we ashamed of trying to live like God and fulfill His purposes, wishes and desires? Well, I guess we kind of were, weren't we? Now, God took it away and now try to explain whom you are. You can't say you are a representative of Ambassador College there "ain't" no

such thing. You try to explain that you are a part of a church that used to be. That gets a little awkward to explain. Well, we are an outshoot of a branch of something that didn't work. I know you wouldn't put it in quite those terms, but that is what they translate it as. God brought us down didn't He? May be we were a little too ashamed of Him of His Name, ashamed of being His witnesses. Maybe we were not what He wanted us to be. As a result, He spewed us out of His mouth. There are an awful lot of reasons that the Church has been destroyed. We don't want to rebuild that temple. Brethren, we have to do better. I don't know how many different ways I am going to say this over the next, weeks, months and years or however long we have to say it. We can't rebuild that. We can build on that foundation, but that was not good enough. It was solid foundation of truth, but as people we did not live up to the standard of God as laid out in the Bible and God destroyed that. We had a lot of the truth, but did we handle it right is the question? Did we do what God wanted with it? Did we build the way He wanted it built? The answer is, No. There was a lot of vanity. There was a lot of jealousy. There was a lot of envy and the priests weren't there to shed blood, to sacrifice animals and take care of all the service of the tabernacle, to camp about it and take care of it. There were there to eat the sheep, abuse the sheep and on and on and on, Jeremiah 23 and Ezekiel 34 all over again.

Now, where was I here?

“And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.

7 For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

8 And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day.

9 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

10 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,” (1 Kings 8:6-10)

God dwelt there. It had been made a place where He would be comfortable dwelling. That is worth a sermon or two right there. A place where God is comfortable to dwell. The place has to be holy for God to be there. That is why Aaron wore that sign that said, “Holiness to the Eternal”. If He is to dwell in us, we have to become holy for Him to be comfortable there. If an organization is to be a temple of God, then He has to be comfortable to dwell there. That is why we have to be transformed, changed to be different to be like Him. He is only comfortable with His own kind. Have you noticed that, you are generally comfortable with your own kind? When you meet a group of people, won't you speak to this one and speak to that one and find somebody that thinks like you do. Where they are kind of your own kind of person. Now, that's my kind of person, you will say. So, you visit with them and tend to

spend time with them rather than someone else who isn't your kind of person. There is a big lesson there. God is seeking people who are His kind of people, who think like Him, who act like Him. That is the kind He wants to be around. If we think like Him and act like Him, the world will not want to be around us. If you are comfortable with the people in this world, then God would not be comfortable with you. Do you follow that? Because, they are not like Him at all. If we have a level of comfort with our relatives in the world and people at work, we think like them, we talk like them, we make the same jokes they make, we find the same things interesting, we can talk about the same TV shows and sit-coms and all the different things the world talks about, its music, its food, everything about it, then God is not comfortable with us. If we are comfortable with this world, God is not comfortable with us. He is not pleased to dwell there. He is uncomfortable in those surroundings. Isn't He going to destroy it? If God is going to destroy it all and make a totally different society and culture, why should be comfortable with the things that are in this world and the people that are in this world? If we are, we are not very much like God yet. Lot was comfortable in Sodom. His wife and his children were comfortable in Sodom, even though if a visitor came all of them wanted them to sent out so they could molest them and abuse them. How could you be comfortable in something like that? I guess if you are a frog in the water and it just keeps getting hotter and hotter, you just don't notice. We are in a society today that God is just on the very edge of completely wiping off the face of the earth. Yet, we are to one degree or another pretty comfortable with this

society. If somebody tells us we need to change a lot of things, we don't know, we think they are meddling now or we want to kind of look back. You do remember Lot's wife, don't you?

This tabernacle was different. The cloud filled the house of the Eternal, Verse 10.

“So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.” (1 Kings 8:11)

When they brought that tabernacle, Solomon sacrificed a thousand animals. That is an awful lot of animals. Think about a thousand of them. Does God tire of our prayers? Does God tire of our sacrifice? Not if we are growing and trying to be like Him. God was very happy with that sacrifice because it showed their attitude toward the tabernacle of God. They were willing to do that and Solomon was willing to do that. Right after that, as soon as Solomon did that. God came to Solomon and said that He would give Solomon whatever he wanted. So, those sacrifices paid off didn't they? Solomon didn't ask for riches, he didn't ask for this or that, but asked for understand and wisdom to be able to rule Israel properly. God granted him that and give him other stuff to boot because he didn't ask for it. A lot of times we get our want list of things we want and do we ask for wisdom, do we ask for understanding, do we ask for love of God for His people? Do we ask for the things that really mean something? Or, do we say, I need another job, I need a better job, I need healed, I need this, I need that, I want something? We have our “gimme” list for a prayer list. That wasn't Solomon's attitude. When Solomon had sacrificed

1000 animals before God, then God came and said, Solomon, I am going to give you whatever you ask. You see, it is a matter of pleasing God. It isn't a matter of following this way and doing exactly this and that so that God will give us what we really wanted in the first place. In other words, we are using Him as a "sugar daddy". If I'll just follow these rules, He will give me whatever I want. It is all selfish. That is the way we are. Instead of saying, Father, give me love, understanding, wisdom so that I might be able to help my brothers and sisters. So, that I might be able to please you. Our goal and our purpose is to serve, help and please our brethren and please God. But, being human beings it is so hard to get that ulterior motive out of there isn't it? Because, deep down inside somewhere, we all want to be blessed. It is not wrong to be blessed, don't get me wrong. But, we need to analyze our motives for asking what we ask of God. Are they selfish? If they are God is basically not going to give us what we ask for. Our "gimme" prayer doesn't mean a lot to Him. Solomon pleased Him on other levels and God tossed the other stuff in to boot. Isn't that what Christ said, "Seek you first the kingdom of God"? If that truly is first and that is your motivation, not selfishness, but truly seeking the kingdom of God, He says all these other things will be added. It is the same principal that He dealt with with Solomon back here. So, you don't have to worry about what you will eat, what you will drink, what you will wear, these are the things the Gentiles seek, He says. This isn't to be our concern. I mean, we have to work and we have to eat and we have to have shelter, but God says don't worry about it, "Seek you first the kingdom of God". If you do that you

don't have to worry about those things. But, we fidget, fret and worry about things that really have no eternal meaning. We are still all too human. Somehow, we have to be transcended from that attitude to where our attitude is not one of ulterior motive and selfishness. There is a lot of work yet to be done to get our attitudes where they need to be. God can add that other stuff, no problem, when He gets good and ready to.

Now, let's go to I Chronicles 6.

"And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after that the ark had rest.

32 And they ministered before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem: and then they waited on their office according to their order." (1 Chronicles 6:31-32)

So, the tabernacle had been moved there and then Solomon was going to build a permanent temple, but they sang in that tabernacle. There is a little instruction for us. Sing before God. Sing the songs of God. Sing to God. We do it in our song service, but is that the only time? Do we sing secular songs the rest of the time? Do we just come before God and sing once a week a few songs to Him? Where is the temple the rest of the week? Are we not the temple of God?

I Chronicles 23, Verse 25

"For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever:

26 And also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.

27 For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above:

28 Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

29 Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size;

30 And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even;

31 And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD:

32 And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.” (I Chronicles 23:25-32)

There came a time when that tabernacle fell into disuse. It had been replaced. There is going to come a time when this situation we find ourselves in today is going to change. Final

judgment will be pronounced upon us. We will either be in the kingdom of God or we will not. How will we have served in this temporary, portable tabernacle? Will we have served according to the way God wants it done, or according to men, according to our own way. Haphazardly, half-heartedly, sometimes unwillingly, sometimes somewhat willingly, how will God judge what we have done? Revelation 3 gives us a clue about what He has done to that, which was done in the fashion that He wanted. We weren't hot or cold, but lukewarm. We have been spewed out as a result. Judgment is now upon us and how we are building, how we are serving the tabernacle. It will come to an end at some point. So, it is time to “make hay while the sun shines”. Isn't it time to be about our Father's business?

It is II Chronicles 1:1-6 where it says Solomon offered the 10 burnt offerings. Now, let's go to II Chronicles 24. There is an important point I want to pick up back there.

“And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.

3 And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.

4 And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the LORD.” (2 Chronicles 24:2-4)

It had fallen into disuse and to disservice. It was not being taken care of properly. I don't think there is any great stretch here to recognize that the Church of God today has not been taken care of properly. It has fallen into great disrepair. So, what happens when the

Church of God is in great disrepair? Do we say, Oh well and move on to something else? What do we do? There is a principal here.

“And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not.” (2 Chronicles 24:5)

This is important, this is urgent, but they didn't hasten. He says, we are going to repair the House of God. He told them to go out and gather money to do it and hurry and they didn't hurry.

“And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?

7 For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Baalim.” (2 Chronicles 24:6-7)

Didn't we see that happen in the temple of God recently? Where the heathen came in and God is sore displeased and God is blowing it apart because they brought in wicked, pagan doctrines. The Church has fallen into a state of disrepair. Shouldn't we be in a hurry to fix it in whatever way we can? First of all, I have to fix me, you have to fix you. I don't think most people in the Church today through the greater Church

of God understand they really need to be fixed. They really don't! Do you understand and grasp that? Most people in the greater Church of God today don't think they need fixed. They think they are all right. Most think they are Philadelphians and it is all those other people that are the problem. I will bet that is in 95% of all of the heads, the brains, of the people who were in Worldwide, that are still left to recognize that they are part of the Church. They think everyone else is the problem, but they are OK. I have gone over this material before. We are the Philadelphians; you are the Laodicians, almost invariably. How many organizations do you know, does anyone know of any who say “We are the Laodicians now”? If you admit you are a Laodician, you are admitting you need fixed. I don't mean neutered, I mean repaired. I think in too many cases we have already been neutered. Maybe that is a lot of the problem spiritually speaking. I don't think we are Philadelphians any more. Maybe we were, but we have taken on an awful lot of Laodicia and had better start fixing here now and not say, we are not the problem. It is done on a Church wide basis as organizations and then it is done with organizations, all of you people I see here are the problem, I'm not the problem. It isn't just one organization pointing at another, it is people within an organization pointing at each other and saying, I'm OK and you have the problem. Where does it end, where does it stop?

Joash saw what needed repaired and tried to get it done and ran into problems. Verse 8,

“And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD.

9 And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness.” (2 Chronicles 24:8-9)

The same type thing in other words. These things are repeated. They called it the offering of Moses and Moses was dead when this happened, but it was the same type thing, bring all you have and let's build something for God. Isn't what God asks us to do, to bring all we have, bring all we are, bring every fiber of our being to build His temple?

“And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.” (2 Chronicles 24:10-11)

The people were willing to give to repair the temple. How much are you and I willing to give to repair the temple? Now this isn't an altar call for money and I don't have a box back here, but how much of ourselves are we willing to give to our brothers, our sisters, to repair the breaches, to heal the problems, to repair the breaches between us and God. Are we content to allow

those breaches to be there? Or are we willing to give of our selves to heal, of our time, our energy?

“And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.” (2 Chronicles 24:12)

We don't really have a choice, do we? Do we really have a choice? The House of God is broken down today. God doesn't like broken houses. It has to be repaired. It has to be rebuilt. Who is going to do it? Are all those people who left Worldwide and went back into the Methodist or Baptist church going to do it? They might build some kind of house, but it isn't going to be God's House. There are very few people today who even have a chance to build the House of God back, because very few are even left who are aware of what has happened. We are some of those who are aware; therefore we are some of those who should be volunteering to do the work. I am going into this series because if we are going to build a temple we need to know how to do it. We need to know what is required. We need to know how to go about it. I don't know where all this is going to go before I am done, but I don't think of anything more important for us to talk about than the fact that the House of God needs repaired and built and what we need to do to get the job done. What does God expect, how does He want us to go about it?

“So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and

they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.

14 And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

15 But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died.

16 And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.” (2 Chronicles 24:13-16)

Now, it is amazing, Verses 17 and 18,

“Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them.

18 And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.”

The people were willing when the leadership said, let's go build the house, let's fix it. They were willing and did that. Then immediately comes another king who says, I have an idol here, let's worship it. All the people say, OK, sure why not? Aren't we so gullible? Mr. Armstrong said, we need to build the church, Oh, OK, let's build a

church. Joe Tkach comes along, let's worship on Sunday, OK, let's worship on Sunday, most said. Scary, isn't it? How deep does our conversion go? How easily can we be misled? How much do we check God's word to find out what He wants? Do you see why I am scared to be a leader of even a small group of God's people in this day and age? I don't want to lead you astray. I want to lead you to build the temple of God the way God wants it built. I don't want you to follow me in any other direction. I certainly don't want you to set me on any kind of a pedestal as something important because I am not. I'm just here to sacrifice animals, you know, the service of the people. To help try to point you in the right direction, so that your relationship with God will get right, so that you can please Him. That is my only function. It has a lot of ramifications, but that is by and large the function. I have to walk a tight rope to push you a certain amount to lead you a great deal to be strong when I absolutely have to be, but to be kind, gentle and merciful because I realize you still very much human flesh like I am. Jesus Christ suffered an awful lot that He might learn compassion and mercy because there aren't any perfect people in God's Church. There are a lot of people who have a lot to learn. If I push you too fast, you get discouraged. If I push you too hard you will get upset and angry. Yet, others will say, push, some will say you are pushing too hard. You can't please everybody all the time. I don't want to turn you off and destroy you before you have a chance either by being too hard on you. It is a delicate balance there to try to push hard enough to get you to change and at the same time don't push so hard that I push you overboard. I hope that you pray

diligently that God give me the right balance there so that we all grow in the stature and fullness of Jesus Christ and we become more like Him. That is our goal and our purpose to become like our Father and our Brother. It is so easy to depart. If it falls into disrepair; it needs to be fixed.

Psalm 15:1,

“LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?”

He is going to send a tabernacle that will be here forever, a house for Him to dwell in and for us to dwell in. He has offered that. He asks who is going to be there, who is going to live on that holy hill? Then He answers it.

“He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.”

He mentions the positive things first then gives the negative things we won't be doing.

“3 He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.”

In other words, we are willing to do things even if it hurts us sometimes. We are willing to change even when it hurts.

“5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these

things shall never be moved.” (Psalm 15:2-16:1)

Our whole system, in this world, is wrong. You want to buy a house so you go to the bank because you don't have the money, you take some of their money and they charge you 6-7-8-10-12% interest on that money for 30 years. You pay for that house about three and one-half times before they give you the papers that say you now own it. Three to three and one-half times, depending on the interest rate. So, you get one house and they get two and one-half, which is what it amounts to. That is a wrong system and we are stuck in the middle of it aren't we? God doesn't want people oppressed like that, that is oppression. He tells is right here in Psalm 15 who is going to be there. You can just read that and that is all it would take, but you have all this sandwiched around both sides of the Psalms because it is hard for us to get the picture. We need to keep reading, to keep studying. Proverbs 14,

“The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.” (Proverbs 14:11)

We just talked about the upright in Psalm 15. Here says our house will flourish, if we are upright. Everything that we do.