

Romans 11:1-5

Sunday 10/11/2009

Romans chapter 11 probably stands out as the greatest chapter anywhere in the New Testament that deals with the nation of Israel. Last week, I showed you how important it is and how it fits into everything that Paul wants us to understand. I basically gave you three things, and I accidentally found it, if you remember, in my notes, in my Bible, of a message that I had preached many, many, many years ago. These three things are about the nation of Israel.

It was based on the idea that there are some things about Israel that we should know, some things about Israel that we should see, and some things about Israel we should watch. We talked about that and kind of put that as a little outline as we came through the introduction. We talked about how important the nation of Israel is out of Matthew chapter 24. I think that we already know now from last week that we are seeing the very fulfillment of Matthew chapter 24. Really, Matthew chapter 24 was fulfilled in 1948. We are seeing now the very beginning of the unfolding of the things in the end. It does not take a rocket scientist to look around this world and see what we are up against and where it is all going.

It is an incredible time to be living in, and it is a time that every child of God needs to be even more fervent in understanding where we are at in these last moments. We used to use the term "the last days," but that term is really not appropriate anymore when you understand where we are at. It is the last moments, maybe even the last seconds, before the Lord comes back and all this begins to unfold. I look at the nation of Israel right now and what is unfolding over there. We do not think about things very much that they happen many times. I do not know if you understand how everything that goes on around us in our world today, in the political agenda that takes place, it all has some kind of piece to the puzzle.

I. The Nobel Peace Prize and Hidden Agendas

This thing of Obama getting the Nobel Peace Prize is unheard of. The guy has been in office six months and has not done anything, and they come out and tell you that they did not give it to him because of what he has done, but they gave it to him because of what he said he was going to do. So what do you do if he does not make that happen? Do you take it back? People look at that, and I love to read the editorials in the newspaper because it gives you such a cross-section of what I call a cross-section of stupidity. It shows you how inept people are today at being able to find out where we are at and all that is going on.

We look at something like that, and part of the crowd says, "Well, that was a great thing because he is a great guy." The other crowd says, "Well, he did not do anything, and it is absolutely ridiculous to give him that." Yet, the average person fails to see the mindset behind what is all going on. Obviously, it will be a president of the United States, and I do not care what president it is, there is a tremendous amount of power which feeds a tremendous amount of ego. We have to maintain a status quo.

Basically, and it is a great lesson for you and for me, when I heard he got the Nobel Peace Prize, a verse immediately came to mind out of the book of Proverbs, I believe it is. It may be in

Ecclesiastes. Somebody asked the question a couple of weeks ago, either in one of my one-on-one Bible studies or in Thursday night Bible study, I cannot remember, but it talked about how that when you sit down to eat with the king and to eat his dainties, that you are better to put a knife to your own throat than to partake of his delicacies. That is a verse I do not know how many times somebody has said, "What does that mean? What does that mean?" It means that when the king invites you and me to sit down to eat, there is an agenda behind it because he just does not eat like people like me and you. He wants something from you, and the message there is to look behind. Do not get caught up in all of the things that are going on and think that it is okay. There is an agenda behind what is going on, and in this world today, there is an agenda behind everything that is going on.

Most people do not see that giving him the Nobel Peace Prize put him in a position now where he has to, with a man with his ego—and I am not just talking about him, any president, any president who has that ego—who has to portray himself, and let us face it, he wants to portray himself as the man of peace and everything that brings along with it. Do you know how hard it is going to be for him to make hard-line decisions now based on the fact that he has been given that award, and everybody, and they better set it, "We are giving this not on what he has done, but what he said he is going to do and what we expect him to do in the future"? Wow. You put somebody, put something in your life like that that gives you some kind of honor and prestige, that they are going to hold you accountable to it, and every decision you have to make from that point on, they are going to bring that back and make it fit that way.

I am telling you, if I had been the president, of course, I never will be, but if I would have been the president, I would have said, "No thanks." I would have been honest enough to say, "I would not just say, 'Well, I do not deserve this, and many other people do.'" I would just simply say, "I do not deserve it because I have not been here long enough, and the bottom line is, you know what, I am not going to guarantee I can take this peace prize because I am not going to guarantee if you guys keep messing with Israel, we are going to have a lot of peace around here." But then that is just me.

Everything in this world today is a piece to the puzzle. This is the difference between having wisdom, knowledge, and then the Bible says understanding. Understanding will be the ability to look at the world scene from your Bible standpoint and understand what God is doing and how all of these pieces fit. I cannot emphasize to you, I cannot overemphasize to you, how where we are at right now is exactly toward the end of this whole thing. As we enter chapter 11 today, I hope that in these last final moments before it all unfolds itself, that it will help you pull it in line because as I said last week, we are living in a day and age where it does not pay to get your nose bent out of joint with God. You may not have enough time to get it back on before He comes back. As Martin Luther used to say all the way back in the 1500s, and it was a good statement then, it is even more prevalent now, he used to say, "Keep short accounts with God."

II. God Has Not Cast Away His People

Now I want you to look at Romans chapter 11. Last week, we looked at the last three verses in chapter 10, and I showed you how those were a transition to bring you into this great chapter.

This chapter deals with probably the single greatest issue for you and for me in the day that we live in, and that is the restoration of the nation of Israel.

I want to read today Romans chapter 11, verses 1 through 5.

Romans 11:1-5

I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Now Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We do love you. We thank you, Father, that you will let us put forth the word of God today. Help us, Lord, in all that we do, and Lord, we will be careful to give you the honor and the glory and the praise in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

Now verse 1 asks a great question, and I guess it is probably the number one question today that would set the political arena of planet earth, and that simply is this: "Hath God cast away his people?" That is how we start this great chapter because we are dealing with a chapter here that is going to show you that that is not true. God has not cast away His people. In fact, verses 2 through 36, the rest of the chapter, is a detailed answer to you and me as the body of Christ why He has not done that, and it is incredible. The answer obviously is no, He has not.

In the opening verses, we begin to see some great examples of how, and I tell you this all the time, we are going to see today through this passage, these four or five verses, you are going to see today one of the great illustrations of how the New Testament principles are revealed through the Old Testament stories, and how important they are, that the Old Testament stories when you read them back there in the Old Testament, that it reveals the New Testament principles. Did you ever notice this? I have commented on this before many times. Did you ever notice how when you get into the New Testament, past Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, there are no more stories? There are no stories. You have Paul writing to churches, Paul writing to individuals, and then you have some of the epistle books where a general epistle books where he deals with issues, but there are no more stories.

When you go through the Old Testament, you know what it is? It is one story after another story after another story. For you to completely understand your Bible to the point where you really, what I call, have a handle on your Bible, you have to be able to understand that the Old Testament stories in the Old Testament are illustrations of the New Testament principles. To me,

a young man or a young lady who really knows their Bible has the ability to see the New Testament principle, line it up back with the Old Testament story. An easy one to look at would be Ephesians chapter 6, and we talked about this a couple of weeks ago, where it talks about putting on the whole armor of God. The great parallel to that that lays that out would be going back to the story in the Old Testament of David and Goliath. When you look back there and you compare the two, there is a place where you have a picture of the Old Testament story illustrating the New Testament principle, or when you read the New Testament principle, you want to really grasp the depth of it, find the Old Testament story that reveals it. That is really the key to your Bible.

There is no way that I could ever teach a class on that; it would be on forever. You would all be dead before we got through with it, and it is so much. That comes with just a lifelong pursuit of your wanting to learn your Bible. You see, in everything that we do, whether it is the Bible Basics class, or whether it is Institute, or no matter what it is, even Sunday morning or Thursday night, and I tell people this all the time, I can have all the material in the world. I can lay out the Bible as simply as I did in Bible Basics or as complicated as we do in the Institute class. We can take time on Thursday night to answer every question you have. We can do what we do on Sunday morning and break down books of the Bible so you can grasp them. But at the end of the day, it has to be your desire to be here and to learn the Bible and to study it through on your own. Yet, after all the years I have in ministry, I have learned a lot of things, but I have not yet learned, nor do I ever think I will learn, how to give you the ability to want to have the desire to learn the Bible. That has to be something that comes between you and God.

Romans chapter 11 is really built around verse 25 of that chapter.

Romans 11:25

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

That is an incredible verse. We are not going to unearth all of that this morning. We will wait until we get into certain aspects of it. But the main point I want you to see here is the fact that we are not, as the church, to be ignorant of the mystery that God is not finished with the nation of Israel. That is really the whole concept of what we are talking about. God has a laying out and a detail of dealing with the nation of Israel so we do not make the same mistake and become wise in our own conceit that God is finished with the nation of Israel.

III. God's Foreknowledge and Purpose

In verse 2, "God hath not cast away his people that he foreknew." I think the first thing that I look at there and just kind of put it all together is the word "foreknow" or "foreknowledge" or "who he foreknew." When you talk to a Calvinist, he talks about foreknowledge being about salvation. Now, obviously, I know that God knows everything. God knowing everything, there is a big \$25 word for that, and that word is omniscient. When you know what the word omniscient means, you know that God is all-knowing. When you want to talk about God being everywhere,

that is omnipresent. When you want to talk about God being all-powerful, that is omnipotent. Those big \$25 words simply mean that God is everywhere, God is all-powerful, and God knows everything. So when you look at it from that aspect, that is exactly what you are dealing with. God does know everything.

His foreknowledge in the Bible is never really dealt with as far as your salvation is concerned. Obviously, God knows who will get saved and who will not. But He never uses the word foreknowledge in that context. He never uses the word foreknowledge in the context of salvation, but rather He uses the word foreknowledge in the context of the job that God has for you to do. You take that aspect and put it into perspective of your own personal life, it changes the dynamics of everything that you and I should be involved in. We should come away from that understanding that God's foreknowledge, the reason God saved you and I, we have talked about this before, the whole purpose of you and I being saved after we are saved is because God has something that He wants us to accomplish. God has something that He wants you to do.

You see the example of it, and we do not have to turn there this morning, but in Jeremiah chapter 1, how God, through His foreknowledge, and there is nothing about Jeremiah being saved in that passage, but it is about what Jeremiah is going to do. Just as God through His foreknowledge had a plan for the nation of Israel, and that is what He is talking about here, God through His foreknowledge has a plan for you. It is a great concept.

IV. The Significance of the Remnant

Then the next thing we want to see in this passage as we move down through it is another great key into your Bible as far as getting the context is concerned. I have told you before that absolutely crucial in anything that you do in your Bible is the aspect of context. There is a great word in this chapter that is a very key word, and it is the word "remnant." Eighty-one times in the Old Testament alone, you are going to find that word remnant. That word remnant will always carry with it, depending on the context, I would say probably 90% of the time, it will always carry the context of the Tribulation Period dealing with the nation of Israel.

In my Bible, if you would go through my study Bible, you will find that probably the word remnant is marked in yellow wherever it is in the Bible that deals with this context. You will find, and I have talked about it many, many times, and we talk about it in our book on how to study the Bible, if you would go through my Bible, in my study Bible, you would find that the key words that always denote the context are marked in yellow for me. You have some day, an afternoon, a rainy afternoon when you do not have nothing to do and there is nothing on television, you know what you have to do? Get your concordance, take a word like the word remnant, start at the beginning of your Bible, run through it, and every time you find that word remnant in there, mark it. When you mark it in there, I do that for a purpose. Somebody asked me a question on Thursday night, or I am teaching the Bible to somebody, and somebody asked me a question out of Isaiah someplace, and I turn to Isaiah, and here I have a whole book of Isaiah with nothing in there but blank pages. I have one little word marked in yellow, and that one little word, no matter what it may be, in this case, we will say it is the word remnant. When I turn to that, and I know some of you think I am so bright with the Bible and so good with the

Bible and so smart with the Bible that I know you can just glance at every book in the Bible, that is not true. I cheat with the Bible, and that means I mark the things in there that the moment I turn to that page, something draws my attention. A little word in yellow or red, or some of you color code your Bible, it looks like those boxes of popsicles you buy. I have 28 different flavors in it, and you come right back there, and there is the word remnant right in the middle of that sea and that ocean of words, and in a moment, in a heartbeat, opening up this page of the Bible, my focus now is to one word that before I read anything in there, I now know what the context is going to be. It is just that simple.

You know how you get that done? You get that done by wanting to know your Bible more than anything else on planet earth and spending the time when you could be doing something else to make sure you get that done. I cannot make you do that. No preacher on this planet can make you do that. I try to make my preaching be motivational. I try to make it be a conviction. I try to make it everything that it is supposed to be, but even in all of that, at the end of the day, you have to go home and say, "I am going to do this in my Bible instead of doing this." You have to decide long term which one is going to pay off more for you, and that is exactly where you are at with it, the word remnant.

You can take different kinds of studies. You can take studies of subjects. Obviously, numerology is a great study. You can study whole books of the Bible like we do many, many times, or you can study verses, but one of the greatest studies you will ever take is word studies, and it does not take a lot of, it does not have to have a lot of books. All you need is a concordance, a good concordance, and your Bible, and an idea that you want to find out what a word means that you heard me talk about, and then simply start putting into your Bible.

So verse 5 says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Now I want to show you here in a moment because I want you to see some of these words here, and I want to, you can turn with me with these. Maybe you just want to write them down. But I want to read you a number of passages in the Old Testament and show you how the word remnant is used because it is a very key word in your Bible, and maybe you do not want to turn to all of them and just want to listen, but then you can get them on your own.

> *Isaiah 10:20*

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.*

> *The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.*

Now you are reading this passage in Isaiah, and you really have no idea. You are just kind of coming through like a lot of God's people, and you want the Bible to make sense to you. Now let me show you some key words here. "And it shall come to pass in that day." Well, that is your first one right there. You know anything at all, you know that "that day" is going to set the context of some place around the Second Coming of Christ. "That it shall come to pass in that day that the remnant of Israel and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob shall no more again

stay upon him that smote them but shall stay upon the Lord the Holy One of Israel in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God." See, there is one, two, three times in that little passage of three or four verses where you have the word remnant, and what it does, you automatically now should know what the context is. Add to that "the day of the Lord," add to that "the house of Jacob," and you have everything you need to discern the context.

> *Isaiah 11:11-12*

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.*

> *And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*

Now the key there again in verse 11 obviously is "that day," but then you see the word "the remnant," "recover the remnant of his people," and right before that word remnant, you find "the second time." So that is very instructive in your Bible because God, we talked about this last week, God recovers His people two times. When I say recover, I mean He brings them back. The first time He recovered them was at the end of the 606 BC captivity, that 70-year captivity, where He gathered them back into the land to have them ready for the First Coming of Christ. That is the first time He gathered them. Notice it says, "It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people." The first time He set His hand to recover the remnant of His people was in 70 years after 606 BC. That would be Ezra and Nehemiah in your Bible when the remnant goes back. The second time He set forth His hand to recover His people was 1918-1948, what we talked about last week. The first time He set His hand to recover the remnant, it set Him up for the First Coming of Christ. The second time He set forth His hand to recover the remnant of Israel, it sets Him up for the Second Coming of Christ. So easy it is. Everything in your Bible points to the fact that He is on His way.

> *Isaiah 37:32*

> *For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.*

Again, Mount Zion being the key.

> *Jeremiah 6:9*

> *Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall throughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets.*

There again, the gleaning. Anytime you find the word "gleaning," mark it in your Bible. The context is going to be God dealing with Israel right at the Second Coming of Christ, and there again, you will find the word remnant.

> *Ezekiel 14:22*

> Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it.

That will be the Antichrist. "And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD." On and on and on and on.

Look at Joel chapter 2. Now Joel chapter 2, if you remember, is in Acts. Remember Thursday night, one of our "water dog" guys, he went and read the passage in Acts. The dumb idiot did not even have a clue that he was reading out of Joel chapter 2. If you would have broken down and asked that clown what Joel chapter 2 meant and laid it back to Acts chapter 2 and broken down the book of Acts, he could not have done it if his life depended on it. You put a gun to his head. But see, I want you to know your Bible. I want you to know, and some of you did, boy, because you nailed him on it. But I want you to know the difference why in Acts chapter 1 and 2, he quotes the prophet Joel, what the prophet Joel was dealing with, and how that were lying to the book of Acts. That is the difference between knowing your Bible and not knowing your Bible.

Now look at this.

> Joel 2:28-32

> And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

> And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

> And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke:

> The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

> And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

That is what it says. No, it does not say saved. Oh, I am sorry, you are not looking at it. It does not say saved, it says delivered. You know why? Because Israel does not get saved, Israel gets delivered. So Acts chapter 2, when you put that over there, that has nothing to do with anybody being saved, it had to do with the remnant of Israel being delivered. It is the difference between knowing your Bible and knowing some things about the Bible.

> Revelation 11:13

> And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

> *Revelation 12:17*

> *And the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

On and on and on it goes. We can literally stay here for an hour and look at the references in the Old Testament that have to do with the nation of Israel concerning them being a remnant.

All through history, and here is a great concept, and boy, if you are ever going to pastor someday, or you are ever going to be in charge of a ministry someday, these are the things that you learn about ministry by looking back and seeing and understanding the things that are involved, and it is true. There are certain things in the Bible that are as absolute as the sun coming up tomorrow, and when you get into the ministry or you get into a place where God has put you in charge of something, you can absolutely, if you have these things in the back of your mind, it saves you a lot of hassle.

Now, all through history, God has gotten the job done. Remember we talked about how that in His foreknowledge, He wanted to deliver Israel because they have something He wanted to do with Israel, and this is a great concept, and one of the greatest concepts you are ever going to find is all down through history, God gets whatever He is going to get done with just a small number of people. It is an incredible concept. In 606 BC, when the whole nation of Israel, probably 18 million people maybe by that time, they were taken all through and scattered and separated out. When God wanted to bring them back and recover them the first time and get them set up for the First Coming of Christ, He used a remnant, a small group. Out of 15 million people, maybe He brought back over a little over 42,000 people, a remnant, a remnant, a remnant.

Israel was then scattered for 400 years. At the First Coming of Christ, when the Lord shows up, what did He do? Did all of the Jews believe on Him? No, it was just a small remnant of the people that believed that He was their true Messiah. It is all true down through history. In 70 AD, when Titus destroys Jerusalem, and for the next 1800 years, they have no land. In 1948, we talked about last week, when God goes back to recover them the second time, I told you at the end of World War II, there was probably no more than eight to nine million Jews left on this planet. Where were the rest of them? They were dead, they were buried, they made up the ashes of the concentration camps. God, just like the first time He recovered, brought back just a remnant.

Then the Tribulation Period, the Antichrist will kill millions of the people on this planet, or they will be killed in the Tribulation, and his main goal in the Tribulation Period after the first part of the Tribulation into the Great Tribulation is going to be one full, the last three and a half years is going to consist of one concept for the Antichrist, and that is wipe out the nation of Israel. That will be Revelation chapter 12 and Revelation chapter 13 for you if you want to look at it. Of course, he kills them down to a remnant, and that is the exact same remnant that Paul is making a reference to here. Here is the connection in Romans chapter 11. In Romans chapter 11, he is telling us that God is going to save a remnant of His people, and there is going to be a remnant, he says in verse 5, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the

election of grace." All down through history, God has dealt with His people based on that concept.

You know what? It is almost true of everything in the Bible. I told you that if you ever get into the ministry, you are going to see it. When God wanted to take the world back in Genesis chapter 6 and was going to wipe out the world and wanted to start the world over, you know what He did? There probably were six billion people on planet earth in Noah's time. God wiped out all of planet earth and started over with just eight people, a remnant, a remnant.

I had a guy tell me one time, and it shows the kind of reasoning that a lot of people have. You know, in your world and my world, if you believe the Bible is the word of God, if you sit here this morning and believe that the King James Bible is the word of God, you realize that you are a remnant. I have had, if you believe that salvation is by the blood of Christ and you take a stand for the things that the Bible teaches, you are a remnant today. The reasoning is, I had a guy tell me one time, just about a year and a half ago, he told me, he said, "Well, how do you guys think you are right?" He said, "You realize that all the people out in the world today that do not believe what you believe, and you are just a little group over here that believe what you believe, and everybody else over here believes something else, and how can you think you are right?" Of course, you know what, that would be kind of intimidating if you did not know your Bible, and my answer back with him was simply this: "You know what, in Noah's time, there must have been six billion people, but only eight people got on that ark." Why? Because the principle is, God's faithful few always get the job done.

How about in the book of Judges with Gideon? Gideon starts out with what, 32,000 guys, and God says, "Got too many." They are going up against one of the most formidable armies in the world, the Midianites. 32,000, God says, "You got too many." He immediately starts cutting them down. You know what Gideon winds up with? 300 men out of 32,000, and God got the job done with the 300. You know why He does that? He does that so we cannot boast in our numbers. You know what one of the terrible sins was in the nation of Israel, and God got David really hard for this? You know what David did besides the only two real things that David did that got God upset was the matter of Uriah the Hittite, and the second thing was this: when he numbered the people. He was not supposed to number the people. You know why? Because they were going to war, and when they numbered the people to see how many they had to go to war, it took away from the fact that it did not matter how many they had to go to war, that God's power was going to give them the victory. Their victory was not in their numbers. I am telling you, folks, it is a great lesson taught in these Old Testament passages.

When God wanted to change the world at the First Coming of Christ, He took a remnant of the Jews, 12 men. When God wanted to start the Church Age and carry it on down to the next 2,000 years, He started with one man, Paul. Down through Christianity, and I will tell you, this is the truth, any church, any time, any place in history, I do not care where you go, it is true of today, it is true of 200 years ago, it was even true in the Philadelphia church, it is just a true absolute statement. In any church on planet earth who believes in being saved and wants to do the work of God, in any church that God has called and empowered and given the Bible, and they are saved and they know, in any church, I do not care where it is, you give me a church of 500, I guarantee

you 100 are doing the work. You give me a church of 2,000, I guarantee you 500 are doing the work, 1,500 are floating. It is true in every culture, it is true in every church age, it is true wherever you go in history, and it is certainly true today. God is going to get it done with a remnant of people who are going to do it. Everybody else sits on the sideline. That is just the way that it is, and you need to understand that that is the way that it is.

If I did not understand that as a pastor, if I did not understand that as a spiritual leader, and I learned that lesson many, many years ago, but could you imagine you as a young pastor someday if you do not learn that lesson and you start to build a church and the church comes to the place where you get four or five hundred people in it, and suddenly you just see the majority of people just do not do anything, and out of a 500 group of church people, 100 people are carrying the load? If you did not understand that great principle, it would drive you nuts. You would beat yourself to death trying to make the other 400 do what needed to do, and of course, you know that that is just the way life is. It will never change, it will always be that way because that is the principle by which it works. Down through church history, a remnant of God's true church has always survived. That was one of the things that the guy could not get Thursday night, the fact that God always has His faithful few, no matter where you are. Maybe you cannot see them, maybe they are not prevalent, maybe they do not stand out where all the spotlight of the world is on them, but I guarantee you they are there. God does it that way for one reason, and it is a great lesson. He does it that way for one reason, and that is the fact that no flesh should glory in itself, but if you get the victory, it has to be of God, and that is a great concept to learn, a great concept to learn.

God is going to call a remnant of His people back to Him, and God has not cast off His people forever. But we begin to see that at the First Coming of Christ, Israel is in absolute apostasy. You have heard me say it many, many times, they do not even resemble themselves, if you know anything about the Bible, as they were at the height of the pinnacle, like we studied in Bible Basics class. The devil has done his work; he has infiltrated the nation of Israel, and he has destroyed them as God's people. In fact, here is where the parallels of history become so incredible to me. At the First Coming of Christ, you find, you can read it in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, consider the nation of Israel at the First Coming of Christ. They have added to the law. They now have feasts that they have that mean absolutely nothing in the Bible. Many of the feasts, many of the things that they are doing, are connected with the pagans that they have been hanging out with for the last 400 years, and almost every aspect of the Old Testament has been done away with as far as God is concerned.

You notice that? You find when you start coming through Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John, you find two groups: you find a group called the Pharisees, then over here you find a group called the Sadducees. You realize that you do not find those groups down through history? You realize that those two people groups pop up during the 400 years while they are scattered out over there when God has nothing to do with them? You realize that in the Old Testament, God had two legitimate people groups that the nation of Israel would have looked to. One of them were the Levites; they were the priesthood. The other one were the scribes. What do the scribes do? They were the custodians of the Word of God. Every Old Testament book that is written

down through the Old Testament had to be copied or written by a bona fide, certified scribe. But boy, by the time we get to the First Coming of Christ, you do not read much about Levites, do you? You do not read nothing about the scribes very much, do you? You know who has center stage? The Sadducees and the Pharisees. They are the religious political groups that grew up in the midst of the apostasy that the devil used now to overwhelm and take over the nation of Israel.

You find the parallel today in the church. The scribes and the Pharisees match up to what we call the Bible scholars today who want to take the Bible out of your hand and give you a bunch of rules and stupidity about where you got your Bible from and do the same damage to the church that it did to the nation of Israel. Temple worship has now turned into a country fair with a McDonald's and a Starbucks and a Walmart, just like the churches today where one time in the Old Testament the priesthood and the temple was a very strict thing. Now Jesus Himself goes in two times, one at the beginning of His public ministry and one at the end of His public ministry, and He drives out the money changers. He closes up the Starbucks. He shuts down the McDonald's restaurants, the cafeterias. He shuts down all the things that take the church and make it just like any other organization out there, and that is what they did in the Old Testament, and that is what the churches do today. Jesus drives them out.

To me, now here is, and I do not have time to get into this this morning, but it is a good study. The first time He drives them out is the beginning of His public ministry, and His statement is this: "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves." The second time He drives them out is at the end of His three and a half year ministry, and His statement is this: "You have made my house a den of thieves." You want a little problem to work out in your Bible? Find out why He called it "my Father's house" there and "my house" here. I will keep you busy for about six months. It is things like that that you have to look for.

Besides the point, not to get it off into that, but temple worship has now turned into a whole just a mess, and Jesus is driving them out of the temples. I will tell you, there again, you find the same parallels. Israel had brought from 606 BC had brought all the pagan things into the church that were absolutely, had brought the, I mean, the Old Testament scenario and had brought Israel as a nation to her knees, and the church did the same thing in 313, 325, whenever you want to mark it up there. I will tell you what I told you before about that verse in Job, "Who can discover the face of his garment?" Watching how the devil worked down through history and watch how history actually points, once you know your Bible, to the very point, for the very time you can almost put it on your watch when the devil began to destroy the nation of Israel and watch it affect and then go on this side of the cross and watch him do the same thing to the church. Either way, my friend, God will get the job done with a remnant. He will get it done with a remnant.

V. Apostasy in Modern Judaism and Christianity

Now today, as we stand here, it is even worse because it has been what, 1800 years since Christ was here, 2000 really. There are some great misconceptions today, and just like, just like Israel, I mean, when you look at the Jew out there today, if you would go somewhere in Kansas City or around the world, and when you start talking like this about God is going to restore the nation of Israel, you get the idea that all the Jews that are around, you know, are all going to come back,

and you say, "Well, I work with some friends, boy, I am glad they are going to get restored. Oh, I do not have to witness to them because they are going to get..." No, no, no, no, not the way it works. Let me just make a blanket statement, and then we will come back and I will show you how this thing works. I guarantee you 98 percent of the Jews on this planet, 98, almost 100 percent of Jews in America, will never be part of that remnant. That is not how it is designed. The Jew today is in such an apostate state. The American Jews are so far out of touch that they will, they will never make it into the Tribulation, or now, I should not say they will make it into the Tribulation, but they will never make it out of the Tribulation.

The church is the same way. You know why? I believe, and I, you know, if somebody would have told me this 35 years ago, I would not have believed it, but after watching the church, watching pastors, watching God's people, and the way that they relate to the things of God in the Bible, I see absolutely no difference from the apostasy that the nation of Israel is in today to the apostasy the church is in today. I am going to make a statement, I am, this is absolutely true, and I have said this before, but I absolutely believe this. I think the only thing that will keep the saved Christians, and I exclude most of you from that, but you are looking around at Christianity, people who claim to be saved, the evangelicals, you know, most Baptist stuff, all the people who believe basic of what we believe but just do not go any farther in their Bible, I believe without a doubt that the only thing that is going to keep the average Baptist church in this country and the average evangelical in this country, the only thing that is going to keep them from going right along with the Antichrist till it was too late will be the Rapture of the church. I used to think the Rapture of the church was to get me out of here. I believe the Rapture of the church is a twofold point at this time. I believe it was to get me out of here and to keep the church from following right into where the Antichrist is going.

You say, "Well, how do you say that?" You know why I say that? Let me tell you something, if you are dumb enough to believe his Bible and take it into your church now, and you cannot discern the right Bible, how are you going to discern the right Christ? The Baptist church will follow him right down the line. But you know what God does? God does not have the Tribulation Period for you and for me; that is for Israel. So what God does, He yanks our chain out of here and pulls us out before it happens. But hey, it does not, it does not take a lead brick to fall on me to realize that the body of Christ would follow him right down the line. They would not be able to tell the difference because they cannot tell the difference of what Bible they have this morning. It is so clear to me, it is unbelievable.

The American Jews are so far out of touch that they will never make it through the Tribulation Period. The devil has done his work, just like he has done the work in the church today, and in both cases, only a remnant, only a remnant. That is why I tell you, and I say this, and I know some of you just think I say it for theatrics, or you just say I say it to make a point. Hey, let me tell you something, I absolutely believe this. I believe it probably more than I tell you I believe it. I believe it to the point where it absolutely keeps me awake at night. I believe it to the point where it scares the fire out of me. But I believe it to the point that most, if not all, of God's people out there in the world today who claim they are saved, who claim to have some kind of conversion, I do not believe they are saved any more than my two dogs at home. I believe they

are victims, just like the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel today goes around claiming to be God's people, and the Jew and God's people walk around claiming to be saved, but there is nothing in their lives that says that, and it scares me to death. It scares me to death because I think I see people who claim to be saved all around this country, and there is absolutely no proof. The attitude, they say, "I am a Christian," but the attitude that comes out of them is not conducive with Christianity. I do not know how to reconcile that. If the Bible really meant when it says that if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, all things are passed away, all things become new, then at the end of the day, how do you get saved and then continually live the lifestyle that the world lives?

You see, the problem is this: we have had what now, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years of that kind of sickening generation of Christianity that we do not understand the real deal, that in the Philadelphia church age, when a person got saved, his life really changed. But we have no examples of it. Oh, it is a scary thing to me. It is a scary thing to me. The devil has done his work with the church today, just like he has done with the nation of Israel.

If you went to a Jewish church just today this morning, or a Jewish Bible study, if they have them, you will find a number of interesting things. Now in your Bible, right there in the Old Testament, your Old Testament is built on what is called the Masoretic Text. The Masoretic Text is the only true text that the Old Testament can be built on. When the King James translators and all the early translators translated the Old Testament, they translated it from what we call the Masoretic Text. Now what is that? The Masoretic Text is a text that has been down through the years. In fact, it started probably pre-Maccabee time, somewhere like maybe 700 BC, and went all the way up to 17, 1800 in there. A group of Jews known as the Masoretes, their job was to make sure that the word of God and the pronunciation of the word of God was absolutely textbook, that nothing was out of kilter, that everything was exactly the way it was supposed to be. In other words, these Jews, even though they are a long way from God, God used them to keep the Old Testament from being corrupted. When Origen gets the Old Testament around 100 and takes it down to Alexandria and comes up with the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, it was the Masoretic Jews that held the line with that true text and preserved for you and for me a pure Old Testament which we know today as the Masoretic Text.

If a Jew would use the Masoretic Text, which he claims to have, he would be faced almost every time he turns around with some prophecy concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, but here is what happens now. You watch the parallels to this, and all this is to help give you information so you better understand the nation of Israel. Now the first five books of the Bible that a Jew follows is called the Torah. Sometimes they are referenced as one book, and the Masoretic Text was the text that they followed, and that is the right text. You cannot read a Masoretic Text in your Bible in English and not see Christ popping out, Second Coming, First Coming, everywhere. The prophecies about a virgin in Isaiah, over and over. You cannot miss the prophecy in Genesis chapter 3, verse 15 about the seed of the woman. Some Jew, God's Spirit would take that and say to the Jew, "Who is that seed?"

But let me show you what they did. Let me show you what the devil did through them. In times, the Jews took the Old Testament Masoretic Text and they replaced it. The first thing they

replaced it with was a book called the Midrash. What is the Midrash? The Midrash is a book of interpretations of the books of the Bible. In other words, the rabbis sat down, read the book in the Old Testament Masoretic Text, and then wrote the Midrash which told them really what the book was all about and what the book really interpreted should be. So a priest today does not, or a rabbi today does not teach out of the Masoretic Text, he teaches out of the Midrash. He takes the book that they wrote that interprets what the Bible says. It would be a lot like me telling you, "Throw your Bible away," and going back and passing out 125 copies of "How to Study the Bible," and we would say, "This now is your Bible. We are not going to use the Bible anymore, we are going to use this." That is exactly what the rabbis did. So when a rabbi gets up to teach this morning, he is not teaching out of the Masoretic Text, he is teaching out of the Midrash. You know why? Because conveniently, when he wrote the Midrash, they got around all the Old Testament references that point to Christ. See how it works?

Then they have what they call the Talmud. The Talmud is a commentary on interpretation of the law made up by again the rabbis, and you will notice that all of these books, all of these added books, take place after the captivity of 606 when they are scattered, and it all comes up and they add these things to their religion to destroy their religion. The Talmud is a commentary again for the last 2600 years has been added all the garbage in it. Then they have a book called the Mishnah. It is legal codes of interpretation also made up by the rabbis. So when a Jew goes to the synagogue on Saturday, when he goes to the synagogue to hear the Bible, he does not hear the Masoretic Text, he does not hear the Bible, he hears the books that the rabbis have written to get around the clear teachings that will point them every time to Jesus Christ and the Second Coming of Christ. Do you see the parallels? The devil did that with the nation of Israel and took the Masoretic Text from them and replaced it with a corrupt set of books, and then he turned around and said, "Now I am going to take the pure New Testament from the Christians and I am going to replace it with a corrupt set of texts." Me figuring that out probably qualifies me to be president. What is so hard about that?

That is why I am telling you, if Jesus Christ does not come down and pull the church out of here, the church will walk right down the road, and when Antichrist shows up, they will say, "Wow, here it is." You know why? Because if they cannot discern what I just told you about Bible-believing churches using the devil's Bible, how in the world are they going to discern the true Christ if you cannot discern His word? The deception is clear, and just like he corrupted the Old Testament Jew from the Masoretic Text by a set of new corrupt books, he took the New Testament from the true church of Jesus Christ and put it, replaced it with a corrupt set of books, and that is where we are at. It is an, and that is why I am telling you, most of the Jews will not make it, but at the same time, I am telling you, boy, you better get it down, you better get it down, you better start seeing it and understanding it. I do not think most of God's people are going to make it either. That is a terrible thing for me to say. It grieves me to my heart. You do not know how I wrestle with that thing when I look it out and I see God's people in his easy believers. When I see God's people that just get saved and then just want to live their life anywhere they want to, I am telling you, I am telling you, that is why the Bible says, "Try the spirits." You want to find out where somebody is at? Try their spirits.

VI. The Elijah and Baal Contest: A Type of the Tribulation

Now all that leads us to another great passage here, and there is so much in these first five verses, but let us look back at Romans 11. Now in verses 2 and 3, it says, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias?" Now that is Elijah, but I know there is Elijah and there is Elisha, and this spelling here does not look like Elijah, but it is Elijah because of the difference between going from the Hebrew spelling to the English and from the Greek spelling to the English. So that is, it is Elijah. "How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 'Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.' But what saith the answer of God unto him?" And here comes the answer: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."

Now that is an absolutely megaton passage. The reference here, if you know anything about the Bible at all, you know is in 1 Kings chapter 19, verse 18. Notice verse 18, 666. You are going to find that 1 Kings 18 and 1 Kings 19 are the key verses about the story of Elijah and what takes place.

> *1 Kings 19:18*

> *Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.*

Now if you would go back to 1 Kings chapter 18 and verse 19, and you do not have to do it if you do not want to, you can, but I suggest you put these notes back in at some point. Let me tell you what you have here. During this time, this is one of these times that Israel, if you know your Bible Basics class, were in the demise of the nation of Israel. In fact, I think that this king was one of the kings that I listed on your chart as we slid down into the captivity of 606. I think I mentioned Ahab without a doubt is the wickedest king that Israel ever had, and you need to learn about Ahab, and you need to see and understand why Paul used it here in Romans chapter 11 with a restoration of the nation of Israel and a remnant getting saved and then ran us back to 1 Kings chapter 18 and 1 Kings chapter 19.

During this time, the nation of Israel is in deep apostasy through the religion of Baal worship. Baal worship has infected the nation of Israel in an incredible way. Israel right now is being run by a king as I said, named Ahab. Ahab has a wife; her wife is what we call a Zidonian in the Bible in 1 Kings chapter 16, verse 21. A Zidonian was one of the Baal-worshipping nations that were prevalent during this time. His wife's name is Jezebel. Now I will give you something else in the Bible. Notice her name, Jezebel. The last part of her name is "Bel," that is Baal. You want to watch words in the Bible that end or names in the Bible or words in the Bible that end in Baal, Balaam, say Balak, say you want to watch words, Baal-peor, that is a place. You want to watch people's names that have the connection with Bel at the end or Bel or somewhere in it is connection with Baal.

Now here is what you have in the Old Testament historical sense. Ahab is a king. Jezebel is his wife. Jezebel is a prophetess. She is your first charismatic in the Bible, and she comes to the

place where because she is his wife, he deals with the political side of things, she deals with the religious side of things. She sets the religious tone, he sets the political tone, and in that, we are going to see it in a moment, you have a picture of the Antichrist in Ahab and the Roman Catholic Church in Jezebel, the great whore of Revelation chapter 17 and 18. The Bible says that she is a spiritual prophethess. She is called the queen of heaven in the book of Jeremiah, and together they have kicked God out and His word out and replaced it with the Old Testament satanic Baal worship.

Now there are two priests that are contemporaries during this time. You need to know this. Both of them are my favorite guys. One of them is Elijah, the other one is Micaiah. Now the story here is focused on Elijah, but Micaiah is also a counterpart. He is a great guy too, and they are the prophets who have the nasty job of preaching God's word in a world to God's people who do not want to hear it, and there are some great lessons in that for you, especially if you are ever going to get into the ministry. The farther we go that Jesus does not come back, the less God's people really want to hear the truth. You know what they want? They want a church without any, they want preaching without any conviction. They want to come to church on Sunday morning but not leave feeling bad about anything. They want a, they want to, they want a church that has no accountability. They want a lifestyle that they can drink, they can go where they want to go, do what they want to do, have their wine coolers, have their wine, have their beer, have everything they want and still go to church on Sunday morning and feel good about themselves. That is the church of Jesus Christ today, and they will not tolerate you ever getting into the pulpit and giving them a conviction, a spirited conviction. There will never be any accountability to the word of God. They want, they want a lifestyle as a Christian where they can do whatever they want to do and still feel good about it. That is the mindset of the nation of Israel. That is what Ahab and Jezebel brought to the party. They brought a lifestyle that we still believe in God, we still love God, and actually God had been replaced with Baal and everything that goes along with it.

When Elijah and Micaiah show up, they throw a wet blanket on the party, and as a preacher of the gospel in the 21st century, I guarantee you, young man, if you ever get to the place where you ever pastor or you ever are in a situation where you are preaching and teaching wherever you may go in America, I guarantee you, you will be the wet blanket on Christians' parties today, and that is why these two guys are two of my favorite heroes. I mean, they are incredible guys, and it is much like it is today.

Now in chapter 18, and we want to turn now back, we have to see this. In chapter 18, we have the great contest, and I love this. To me, a lot of the Old Testament, even though a lot of ways it was harder, a lot of ways I think it was better. This is one of them because today in churches, you can argue back and forth of who is right, who is wrong. Back then, you just got two swords and thrashed it out. I like that because here is the problem: Jezebel, who is a religious prophethess, has 400 prophets of Baal. Elijah is all by himself, and Elijah takes on 450 prophets of Baal one on one, and what he does through that is bring about a great concept to the nation of Israel who were caught up in all of this. I have a little note in my study Bible that around here that says at the top, "The Shootout at the OK Corral." That is what you have now.

I do not know if you know it or not, but last Thursday night, many of you had your first encounter with the prophets of Baal, and we had nine Church of Christ people show up, and one of them works with Zach, and they come to the point where that one of them had been hitting on Zach and trying to, you know, they saw Zach, like they all do, they saw a great, fine young man, and they thought to themselves, "This is exactly, this is exactly what they do." So they go after Zach, and Zach played it cool, and Zach played it dumb, and Zach just listened to the guy and talked to the guy and asked the guy a few questions, and then Zach basically asked me, he said, "Is it okay if I just tell him that they can come to Thursday night Bible study and get any question you want to ask?" And I said, "Sure, absolutely." So Zach went back, and I said, "Just play it down, play it stupid, play it down." Zach went back, and he said, "Well, you know what, we have a Bible study on Thursday night, and I asked my pastor, he, we asked any question you want to ask, he said he would love to have you come in and ask some questions." I mean, they jumped on that like ugly on an ape. Nine of them showed up.

Now let me just say this, I have an agenda behind everything I do, and when I had a group like that come in, I want to use that as a teaching tool, and if you notice how it went that night, I just knew how long, I was counting the seconds, how many questions we would get in before somebody brought up Acts 2:38. What was the second question somebody asked? The first question about something, and the next question, Acts 2:38, was the guy asked, the guy with the Elvis Presley sunglasses, he asked, in the afro, he asked, "You know what, what do you believe about Acts 2:38?" And at that point, I knew we were off to the races, and off we were.

Now here is the bottom line. This coming Thursday night, here is what we are going to do: we are going to have a debriefing. After every good military operation, you need to have a debriefing. I am going to show you why I did what I did the way I did. I want to show you how by what I did, I got them to expose to us their weaknesses, and then at the same time, I am going to, we are going to go through and I will teach you about everything that they know about or they follow through on, and then we are going to go back, and then I am going to, we are going to talk about because they are coming back. They went with such a nice, warm feeling. I mean, they went out of here like, and now that one guy, he actually said he is praying for my salvation. I think that was the nicest thing anybody has ever said to me. And then the other guy, he said, "I think God is using you." And I said, "Well, that is nice." I said, "There are some people in my church that would give you an argument about that, but, you know what, thank you for that, thank you for that."

You notice how I ended it? I gave him five, ten minutes to close out the thing, and the reason why I did that is because I wanted you to hear from his own mouth where he went in light of what we had all talked about, and if you are not, if you did not, if just refresh your memory, if you have not got a tape of it, get a tape of it and go through it again this week, and then Thursday night when you come back, we will debrief everything, and then what we are going to do is we are going to take the guys and let them come to the point where they go home, they go to work on the weak points, and then when they come back in the next time, because he is going to call me, he got my card, got my number, gave me his, and he wants to call me because I know exactly what they are thinking. They are thinking, "Wow, you know what, we can win these guys

over." The next time they come in, I am not even getting in it. You will have the ammunition, you will have it.

Whether you know it or not, what you got in last night or last Thursday night, which is good, you know, in the military and the special forces groups, I do not know if you know this or not, but what they do in the military and special forces groups and Navy SEALs and all that, what they get you through your training and get you up to the point, they will send you someplace. It is kind of like your final initiation. They will send you someplace in the world where there is a conflict, and it is a very top secret thing, and they will send you someplace in the world, drop you in in an A-team or however they are going to do it. They will put you in there for one reason: that is so you can kill somebody. They call it being bloodied. Sometimes they call it trigger time, and they are going to put you in a scenario in some foreign country that you never heard about or nobody ever hears about, put you in as an insurgency team, you go in with some hardcore leadership, and you go in for the purpose of getting bloodied. That is exactly what happened to you Thursday night. You got bloodied, and you got some bayonet practice, you got a little trigger time, but at the same time, you got that, and I was absolutely impressed.

You know what, if you notice their whole concept was one of arrogance. Notice how arrogant they were. Every young man who got up had a confidence and an authoritative confidence about themselves when they spoke the scriptures that they could not even match, and I will tell you what it was, it was, it was exactly what I was looking for, exactly. Nothing will make you and get you in tune and in touch better with how to deal with these things. You need, and many times you hear me say it because I say it from the pulpit so many times, I think it goes in one ear and out the other, but Thursday night you got a reality of what I mean when I am talking about knowing how to use your weapon. Now if we were in the Old Testament back then, I would not have used my Bible, I would have pulled out a sword. I would have been still hacking them to pieces. That is the difference between the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God. I hacked them to pieces anyhow, I just used that sword instead of a real one. See, you need to learn how to use the sword. You need to learn how to get into a sword drill with somebody like that, know where he is going, know what they are going to say before they say it, and know how to hit them off at the pass, and I have got to tell you, I got at it for you guys what I wanted, everything and more, and still got the opportunity to have them come back again. Now there was a pretty good spirit here last Thursday night. Be prepared because I guarantee you this, the next time it goes down, you will not see that spirit because it will be the last shot, and we will take it, and we will take it. But it was an incredible, incredible concept, and I was never, you know, there are very few things. I mean, you know, you are in the ministry and you are working with people, and we go through things and we do things, and there is always a lot of crap you have to put up with in any ministry, in any church. There is always a lot of issues and all those stuff, and you know, you just keep plugging away and plugging away and plugging away, and you meet one-on-one, you do Thursday night, and do Saturday morning, and do all the things. But you know what, the thing that makes it to me as a pastor that what you are doing is making a difference and is exactly what I am looking for is what I saw Thursday night. Young men that stood up, took the action, took the affirmative, and went right after him. Not one guy, we even had a guy in there, he is in the nursery this night, he is only been saved for about six months, and he took him on. Yes, he did.

He did, he did. And that is exactly what I am looking for. You know what, your doing is working when you see the men, and I guarantee you ladies, next time you can jump into. They brought two of their ladies. Take them on the parking lot, beat fire at them, I do not care. I was proud of you, proud of you, and that is exactly the kind of church I am looking to build, and I was proud of you.

Now this thing about Ahab and the prophets of Baal. Now look at this thing, you have to see this. This will mean more to you since last Thursday night than it will be, you know, since then, because now you have a, you have a point of reference. You actually know and have been in a combat with some prophets of Baal. We will, you know, everything you need to know about Church of Christ, and then when we are done with them, we are going to bring in Jehovah Witnesses. Now we are going to bring in the Mormons. My favorite one will be, we bring the Charismatics in. That will be my favorite one. They are all going to get a shine copy of my book, "Charismatic Movement."

All right, look at this thing over here in 1 Kings chapter 18, verse 17. Now watch this.

> *1 Kings 18:17-40*

> *And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*

> *And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.*

> *Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.*

> *So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.*

> *And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*

> *Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.*

> *Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under.*

> *And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.*

> *And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.*

> And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

> And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

> And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

> And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

> And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

> And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:

> And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

> And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

> And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

> And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

> And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

> Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

> Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench that was round about the altar.

> And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

> And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

Now that is a great passage, and that is one of my favorite passages in the Bible. I like the Old Testament. I mean, I know there are some tough things in it, but getting to kill people that do not like you has always been a good idea with me. The first thing I want you to notice here before I forget, down verse 40, and this is a great key here, notice the brook of Kishon down there. That is very important. If you remember back in Judges 4, that is where Sisera was killed, the brook of Kishon down there by Megiddo, down there where the Second Coming of Christ is going to take place.

What you have there is simply this, and I like Elijah. Elijah is a man's man. I have always been gravitated to men and guys who could stand up for what they believed. I guess that is because spiritually speaking, I was raised by two of the toughest war dogs you ever found in your life, and it must have rubbed off on me, I do not know, but I enjoy that. The first thing I notice down here is that it says in verse 17 is Elijah's directness. Elijah is a fearless man when it comes to this particular point here, and I know he has some weak moments later on, but we all have our weak moments, but right here when he needed to shine, boy, he is shining, and he goes up against the king. He always reminds me of John Knox. We have a John Knox village out here. Most people do not know that John Knox village is named after the great Presbyterian preacher, John Knox. John Knox was a fearless guy. You know what John Knox did one time? He stood before Bloody Mary. Bloody Mary was the queen that brought England back under the Roman Catholic jurisdiction and just about butchered and killed everybody. They called her Bloody Mary. Remember, you probably had a drink to her one time in your life at some point. Bloody Mary was her name because she killed so many Bible-believing Christians, and John, everybody who took a stand against her, she had killed. I mean, she earned the name Bloody Mary, and old John Knox went before her, was calling for her, and old John Knox, and I have a painting of it at home in one of my books, one of my favorite deals. Old John Knox is standing down there, and his picture has him pointing his bony finger in her face, and he is giving her Hail Columbia, boy, on the blood of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church and all that she is doing killing God's people, and you know what? He survived. He survived. Elijah always reminded me of John Knox because he is up against the king, and when he gets up against the king, I want you to notice what the first thing the king says when he sees Elijah, and this is so true.

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim." Puts him right back between the eyes. You ever notice how the people that are not doing what is right always want to find fault with the people who are doing what is right? That is Ahab. See, Ahab has Israel deep in Baal worship. Elijah is the guy who is preaching the word of God, and what does Ahab say? "Oh, you are the one that is troubling Israel." What does Elijah say? "No, sir, it is you that is troubling Israel, O king, your majesty, it is you." One time they brought Micaiah up, and they brought Micaiah in in 1 Kings chapter 22, verse 14. In fact, that is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. On my preaching Bible, which I do not use anymore, I have kind of retired it, but on the front of my thing, I preached that thing from one end of the world to the other. I have 200 messages in that Bible, and on the front of that Bible years ago, when I was just a young kid, and I knew that I was going to get into some battles, and I put on the front of that thing, I took it to a

Bible bookstore and had a guy, you know how you put your name on in gold, I had him emboss this verse in gold, and it is the verse out of 1 Kings chapter 22, verse 14.

> *1 Kings 22:14*

> *And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*

I love those guys. And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you have troubled Israel."

Look at verse 21. This is the shootout, man, I love it. "And Elijah came to all the people and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." I like that. I like that a lot. "And the people answered him not a word." Ah, must be baptized then. He instead, "Elijah unto the people, I, even I alone, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men." I think that is a good thing. Let me tell you something, his courage in the face of standing against 450 men is admirable to me.

Now I appreciate all of you being here, and I appreciate your, those that helped me in ministry, and I know too far as me, the ministry is simple. You get a preacher who God gives a burden, he gives the vision, and then God brings people into that who grab his vision, grab his burden, and then everybody gets together and accomplishes what God wants to. That is the ministry in a simple form. That is basically what it is. But if you ever pastor someday, always be appreciative of the people that God gives you that grabs your heart and grabs your aspect of ministry and wants to do something for God with you. Always be appreciative of that, but do not come to the point where you ever think at the end of the day, when push comes to shove, that it still will not just be you and God. Just as Israel could not hang on to all their numbers, you as a pastor or a religious teacher or somebody who teaches the Bible or in charge of some ministry, you cannot take satisfaction, you cannot take comfort in the fact that you have a whole bunch of people in your church that believe what you do, so when push comes to shove with the world, the flesh, or the devil, or the Ahabs, or the prophets of Baalim, you can fall back on them. You ought to be in touch with the word of God that you ought to go through your life that in actuality, at the end of the day, it is just going to be you and God, and that is enough. I appreciate everybody else, I appreciate it, but the truth of the matter is, if it may be known, if you do not want to come here today, you do not have to come. You do not want to be part of the ministry, you do not have to be part of it. If next week nobody shows up but me, I will say it is worse, sit out and enjoy it, get back up and preach it again, and I will do it by myself, but I am going to do it, and you need to develop the determination. Yet to use that sword, there was a confidence there, 450 to one. I mean, let me ask you a question, if you went someplace and there were nine guys waiting to nail you, you would get a little nervous, did not bother me one bit. You know what? Because at the end of the day, I am right where he is. If my God is not better than his God, if God has to depend on me to do this, He is in trouble.

I think we are the saddest, the picture, the most terrible look at. I look around the world today, and I think, you know how I know that this world in Christianity is such a mess? Because God has got to depend on a guy like me to believe His book. Let me tell you something, you better get set in your mind that as we get closer to this, it may just come down to you and God, and the things you have to face, the things you have to deal with, the things you have to come up against.

The only thing that is going to get you there is believing that book that God gave you, and you and God making up the majority. When there are 20 of them or 30 of them or 450 of them, it is almost equal, almost, almost. You better get the idea in your head with what is coming down for America and what is coming down. It is nice to be here today, and it is nice to have everybody loving God today, but you know what, the way this country is in upheaval, in a way it is changing, this could go away as quickly as it started, and you better be able to fend for yourself spiritually, and you better learn how to protect yourself with that sword, and quit sniveling around like you are some kind of little pantywaist, and get in that book, get your head out of wherever it is at, and realize where you are at on God's clock and what needs to be done before He gets back because you might just be stuck in a bad situation, and I am not saying that for any other reason because it is true.

You know what, when your parents were, when you were young, and your parents tried to tell you what life was really like, did you listen? Did you, when they said, "No, you cannot take the car tonight," and you did not understand why, and you threw a hissy fit, did you listen? Did not you think that you were a lot smarter than they were? I did. When I was 18 years old, I thought my parents were the dumbest people in the world, and when I was 21, I could not find out how they got smart so fast. There are people in your world who know more about life than you do, starting with your parents, whether they are good parents or bad parents, saved or lost. They have a perception of life that young people do not have. Young people think they are invisible. I was at the fitness center the other day, and I had my 101st Airborne jacket on that I just wear when it was cold in the morning, and I was walking out getting ready to go home, and I was walking by a guy on the machine, did not even pay attention, and he said, "Hey, so you in 101st?" And I looked over and I said, "Yeah, I was in 101st." He said, "When?" I said, "68." He said, "I was in the 82nd in 65." And he got off the machine and came over, you know, and he was, he was about my age, you know, maybe a little bit older, and we talked for a little bit, and he says, "Isn't it incredible how back then we thought we were invincible? We could whip the world." And I said, "Yeah, but I said, that is your chain, did not it?" And he laughed, he said, "Yeah." And that is the way it is. See, you are young, you have got your strength, you can play with your strength. You can play football well, you can run all day long, you can high jump, you can shoot baskets because you have got that strength. You think you are something, but you know what your problem is? You have not got any sense. The Bible lays it, the Bible says that they have got people who have, who the young people have, have, have heat, but they have no light. The old people have light, but they have no heat. You have got to find a balance in the middle. Somebody is out there, "Come on, look at me, I can weigh this. Yeah, yeah, look at that boy, look at me go. Yeah, I want to make a touchdown, watch this, watch this. Wow, I can do everything. Once we hit this ball out there, yeah." And in your own life, you are a disaster. Why? Because you have got no sense, and you will not listen to anybody that has got some sense. You would not listen to your parents, you would not listen to anybody in school, you would not listen to your teachers.

Where you are at, that Elijah said unto the people, "I only am I remain a prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are 450." Get used to standing by yourself because you may have to do it someday. Now look at verse 24. He says, "You guys go first." He said, "Let us find out who God really is. You get your offering down there, put it on down there," and he says, "Will the first

God that speaks by fire, that is who everybody will follow." "And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under." And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and the Bible says in verse 26 that they called from Baal morning even to noon. Now that is very significant because the key part of Baal worship was the worship of the sun, remember? And the sun is its highest place, now the zenith at noon, and that is when they had the, that is when they had their main service, kind of like noon mass with the starburst behind the altar with a little round sun-shaped wafers. And so they started the morning, and at noon they thought, "Surely the fire will come at noon because the sun god is right overhead looking straight down on us." And here it comes, "And they cried, O Baal, hear us! But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made." "And it came to pass at noon," see, everything centers around noon, "Elijah mocked them." Oh, he did not have the sweet spirit of Christ, did he? I imagine one Christian mocking another person's religion. "And it came to pass at noon that Elijah mocked them and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god." Notice, small "g" god. That is a, that is a derogatory statement if he had figured it out. "Either he is talking," maybe he is on the cell phone, cannot get to you right now, keep calling, keep going, maybe he is busy, maybe he is on vacation taking a trip, "or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." Look at verse 28. "And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." "And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice," that would be six o'clock, "that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

"Then Elijah said unto all the people, Okay, enough time for this fooling around, Come near unto me." "And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down." "And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and he said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench that was round about the altar. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."

Now that is a great passage, and that is one of my favorite passages in the Bible. I like the Old Testament. I mean, I know there are some tough things in it, but getting to kill people that do not like you has always been a good idea with me.

Now, the doctrine of this story, there is a reason why he picked this story for Romans chapter 11, because this story is a picture of the Tribulation Period, and it is a picture of God calling out a remnant from the end of the Tribulation Period that is steeped in the Baal worship of the New Testament, and that is why he chose this for the verse that he put in there about prophets of 7,000 prophets not bowing to Baal at 1 Kings chapter 18, because it is dealing in both cases, one prophetically and the other historically, dealing with the restoration of the nation of Israel.

Here is what you have: Ahab in your Old Testament. You have 18 types of the Antichrist, 18 men, 18 men throughout the Old Testament that foreshadow the coming man of sin. Ahab is one of them. Ahab represents the Antichrist. You know what the name Ahab means? It means "brother of his father." Stop, think about that for a moment in light of 2 Samuel chapter 21, verse 18. You see, the key thing of Baal worship was sex, and if you know anything about the pagan religion of Baal worship, you know you have the moon, the female deity, you have the sun, it is the male deity, and they chase each other around the sky, and then when they have their solar eclipses or whatever, then they have a union. See, to them, that is orgy time. But the sex got so perverted, if you know the Old Testament, that it did not limit it to just men and women, it was men with men, women with women, it was men with animals, it was men, women with animals, it was men with boys and girls, it did not matter, it is where it went. In some cases, it was even incest with their own family.

Everybody knows the story of David and Goliath, do not you? Yeah, big old Goliath down there. But most people do not know the story of David and Goliath when it says in 2 Samuel chapter 21, verse 18 that David and Goliath had four brothers, and then names them. Then you go to a place over there in Chronicles where it says David had four sons, and he names them, and they are the same boys. You see, Goliath fathered his own sons from his own mother, and in doing so, come to the place where they were his sons, but they were also his brothers. He was mother, and they are strange that an Ahab means brother of his father, but to pay attention to your Bible.

Then you have Jezebel, Ahab's wife, the Zidonian queen. She is a picture of the religion. Israel is in total Baal worship, just like now and throughout history and will be in the Tribulation Period. Elijah, he is the man of God. In Revelation chapter 11, you have two men that come back to help restore the nation of Israel in the Tribulation Period, typified by Ahab and Jezebel. You know who it is? Moses is one, Elijah is the other. Revelation chapter 11, every place you go, he is the man of God. He is one of the two witnesses who come down and lead the remnant out at the end of the Tribulation Period.

You see now, that is why learning your Bible, Paul used the reference to 1 Kings 18 and 19 in his passage in Romans chapter 11. He wants to show you that if you get a principle in the New Testament, Romans chapter 11, there is a story in the Old Testament that illustrates in a story the principle. That is what you have, both passages that deal with the same event. One of them is the principle involved, that would be Romans chapter 11. The other one is a story that lays out the

principle in great detail, that would be 1 Kings 18 and 19. It is the key to understanding your Bible. All the New Testament principles that teach a great truth will be illustrated by a story or in some cases several stories in the Old Testament, and they will go hand in hand. The Old Testament story, the revival will be laid out, or the story of the revival in the New Testament principles.

The Jews today in this age, they have a choice. They have had that choice from Acts 7 up to the Rapture. They can either live under the law and die and go to hell, or they can live under the New Testament as a child of God and go to heaven after they get saved. Prophetically, these verses teach the salvation of the nation of Israel in the Tribulation Period. Romans 11 in the Old Testament passages. Elijah shows up in Revelation chapter 11 with Moses. The Antichrist requires the Jew in the Tribulation to bow down to an image and kiss it or they will die. Revelation 12, 13, 1 Kings 18, 19, Daniel chapter 1, 2, and 3. In the Tribulation, the church is gone, it is raptured out of Revelation chapter 4, 1 Corinthians chapter 15. That Jew has to flee Jerusalem, we saw it last week, Matthew chapter 24. Has to endure unto the end, favorite verse of our water dogs the other night in Matthew chapter 24. There are two groups of people saved in the Tribulation Period: the Gentiles, Matthew chapter 22, verses 1 through 10, and the Jews, Matthew chapter 24. They both make up a remnant in that day. A man is saved by trusting Christ not as his paternal savior but as a Messiah and being baptized in the concept of Acts chapter 2, verse 38, another verse the water dogs could not get straightened out the other night.

You see, my friend, this is why, and you need to understand, because if they worship the Antichrist in his image and take his mark or his number, it is a sure ticket to hell. But in both cases, the Jew and the Gentile come out of the Tribulation as a remnant, and this is what he wants us to see in the first five verses as we enter into Romans chapter 11, that Israel is going to be saved, but it is only going to be a remnant. If it is a remnant for Israel, oh, let me tell you something, if you have not figured out the great consistencies of the Bible yet, if it is a remnant for Israel, and all down through the history of the Bible, God has done what He has done through a remnant, I am telling you one last time, and then I am done. You can do with it whatever you want. The bottom line is this: if God brings back and only delivers a remnant out of the Tribulation Period of the Jew, I guarantee you there will not be a remnant, the Rapture of the church out of the, out of the church. No, I am not somebody to believe what some people teach, you know, that not all the saved people are going to go. No, no, no, I go much farther than that. I am telling you that most of the people that says they are saved are not saved. They are caught up in religious Christianity, just like the Jews are caught up in the apostasy of the nation of Israel. They both have the same Bibles, they both have the same stuff, they both have corrupted themselves the same way, and they both run around with some kind of arrogance like they know when they are on, and they are always picking up, pointing their fingers at the ones who are doing what is right when they are not doing what is right. I am telling you, learn how to use the sword.

I want to leave you with two things today, and opening up this chapter, and there are two things that you, you better, you better keep your head on a swivel of what is going on around in the world. You better begin to understand that you are living in a day and age where you are not the

smartest light bulb in the box. If you are out of fellowship with God on a continual basis today, you better get it tidied up. You better cross your T's and dot your I's. I am telling you, just like Elijah told the nation of Israel all the way back in 1 Kings, He is coming, and when He is coming, he is coming with a vengeance, and you are living in a day and age where you better get your head out of your rear end or wherever it is at, and you better realize that you better not be found playing the games when your Lord comes back. That is my advice to you, my advice to me.

I cannot, in my mind, it insults everything that I am for God to give me a job to do, even if I do it badly, even if I screw it up from one end to the other. But the thing that bothered me is for God or anybody to give me something to do and then count on me to do it, and then for me just to blow it off. "Oh, I forgot. Oh, I got busy. Oh, I had this. Oh, I had that. I had that." I cannot in myself, I cannot reconcile to myself God giving to me something to do and then me just blowing it off because I got something better to do. I am telling you all that to get you ready for what is coming in Romans chapter 11 and what is coming around this world today, and if you cannot see it, and the thing that bothers me is God's people that see it and it does not bother them. It does not bother them. It does not bother people that their friends are dying and going to hell. It does not bother them that maybe their own kids or their own family are lost without Christ. It does not bother them. All we see is what we want to see. The world is a big playground to us when we can have all that we want. That is one of the problems with America. The real strong Christians were never in America. They came out of the Reformation, and they come out of the Europe, and they come out of the places where the persecution was so strong that gave them a purpose. We were a people without any purpose, and I, I stand up here and I preach to you like I got a purpose. Let me tell you something, we are a mess. I am telling you right now, people, I am telling you right now, and you put all money you have gotten a bank on it, He is coming, and He is coming quick. This thing is winding up, and you better get your head straightened out, and you better get yourself focused, and you better decide what is the priority in your life. You better, some of you better do what Lot did when he found out after he wasted his time. Remember what he did when he found out God was coming and going to destroy it all? He went to his family, he went to his children, and he begged them to do what is right. You know what the Bible says? They laughed at him. As one, it mocked. Job's kids said to themselves, "You, Daddy, why, Daddy, you would be the last person in the world that I think God would give a message to. You, Daddy, you, Daddy."

I am done. Romans chapter 11 is a great chapter. He tells us not to be ignorant. Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of Gentiles come in. The fullness of Gentiles is almost in, and we as a church, as individuals, need to be about our Father's business, and there is no room for anybody not understanding the urgency of the hour and what we have got to get done. Yet I stand here before you after saying what I just said, realizing that most cases, if in most churches, and this church is a little different than most, but if you, I preach this in most churches, you have to go one ear out the other. People right now hearing what I am saying would be thinking to themselves, "Man, I have got to get out and see what the chief score is," or "I have got to go do this," or "I have a thing this afternoon I have got to do. I have got this, I have got that." That is more important, and they are allowing lives to pop. What is more important today

in your life, in my life, than dedicating the last moments that we have to doing what God wants us to do?

Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. Lord, help us today. Help us to be found faithful in all the things that we endeavor to do for the Lord. We get so sidetracked. You know what, I get so sidetracked, Lord. There are so many things in my life that pull me off task, so many stupid things, and Lord, we are such a frail people. We are such a people who need an accountability. Lord, we are so screwed up in our priorities, our balance, and you know, Lord, we just, we, we get an attitude toward God, and we just, we just lose everything from a perspective, and everything out there in this world becomes more important than what God has called us to do. And Lord, I know I look ahead just like any parent looking out for their children. My job is to look nigh into my flocks and know the state of my flocks, and I am telling them, Lord, today, and Lord, you know it is true more than I ever could know what is coming to this country, what is coming to American Christianity. It is either going to go to the point where we are going to stand there naked as a jaybird because we blew the opportunities we had, or we are going to go through the greatest bloodbath that we could ever hope that we are going to lose everything we have got. We are going to be destitute. We are going to have nothing. We are going to lose our home. We are going to lose everything financially we have. We are going to lose everything we have, and we are going to have to just get through knowing that God is enough. Boy, what a shock for us. What a shock for us with all the cars we have and the nice houses we have and all the things we have in our homes and all the fun things we have, our golf clubs, our ball bats, our roller skates, our basketballs, everything. What a shock for us to wake up some morning and have to deal with the reality that it is all gone, and now it is just me and you. Your Father, help me to always preach the truth. Help me to be like Micaiah, not care what anybody thinks but preach the truth. Help me be like Elijah who always just stands for the things that God wants. Lord, you send those men back in the Tribulation, at least Elijah. Lord, help us to be Elijahs today in these last days before Jesus comes back, these last moments of this last time, and we will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.