

Welcome, brethren, to this seventh-day Sabbath.

Today we're going to look at a particular topic because it's important from the point of view of understanding where we are in time, but also something that God has stated and made a promise, and that promise in the beginning looks like it's really obvious that, "Oh, yes. This is true." But there is a component in it that we need to be aware of because this is really about us and our personal choice. At this point in time up to the return of Joshua the Messiah it's going to be very important.

But God has made a promise to us and we can believe that promise or not. It's up to us. But we can believe God's word and we can believe the promise but... There's a "but" in it and we're going to look at that today.

So, we're going to start by looking at **Hebrews 13:5—Let your conduct**, which is your manner, your way, your conversation is another way to put it. This is what God is talking about here is, well, **Let our**, the way we live our life, **be without covetousness**. Now, that's not with a greedy intent. Because we can see intents within our self. We should be able to with God's holy spirit. Well, we should look at ourselves to make sure we're not trying to gain something from our actions or our words or even our thoughts.

Let your conduct, or your way of life, **be without covetousness**. Which is not greedy intent, not desiring to get something back in return. **Be content...** Now, why would you want to be content? Because there is a lot of people that would look at their environment, and we in the Body of Christ should look at our environment and say, "Well, we should be content." Well, we should be content because we know the truth. That's the first thing. We should be content because we've been called. Out of all the billions of people that exist in the world we've been called. What an incredible blessing.

Well, this is "be content." This is to be content with everything that God has provided. Because God provides everything. So, things that we think we may want, well, they may not necessarily be the best thing for us. They may not be the best thing for us on a spiritual level. We should just look away from the physical and look at the spiritual part.

I've often thought about people that say, "Well, I would like to win money," or "Like to be really wealthy." Well, everyone has a different motive behind why they want that. If it's natural, of course, it's selfish. They want it because they think it's going to solve their problems.

But that may not necessarily be the best thing for a person that has been called because it may not be the best thing spiritually. Why? Because when we have less in the world's eyes, if we have less, well, then we turn to God and we rely on God. But if we have a lot on the physical

side of things, the money and all the different things that go with it, the way of mankind is that we rely less on God. That's why it wouldn't be good for us spiritually.

If we did have a lot of money and if we did have a beautiful big home and lots of land, all the things we want, beautiful cars, well, that could be a big danger for some. Not everyone, but for some, because it may not be the best thing spiritually, and our life is all about our spiritual life. Not about our physical one, about our spiritual life. Because God is molding and fashioning something which is all in the mind, and therefore, if we don't rely on God, well, how can we enter Elohim? Because we're not dependant on God, we're dependant on self, we're dependant on the money that may or may not have been provided for us.

Be content with such things as you have: for He Himself, talking about God the Father, **has said...** Now, this is what we're going to look at today, **I will never leave you, nor forsake you**, which is "let you go," or "to let go."

God has made a promise here saying, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." That's incredible statement, incredible promise. But there is a "but" in this, and it's about us. Because the truth is, we can choose to leave God. God won't leave us, but we can leave God. When we leave God, God will cut off the flow of His holy spirit because of our choices, our sin, our unrepented sin.

Verse 6—So we may boldly say, we can have this great confidence about this, **The Eternal (the LORD) is my helper**. Well, we know that is true. If we're part of the Body of Christ we know the Eternal God who has created everything, that can provide anything - and it's not hard for God to do these things - He could do that for us if it was to our spiritual benefit. Because God's not going to give us something that's going to destroy us, but we may be given things as a test to see, well, what is in our heart, what is really in our thinking really, and therefore, somebody may be given more. Well, it's a big test. They may succeed. Some may fail.

The Eternal is my helper, I will not fear. Now, we're heading to a time where fear is going to exist in mankind. It's going to exist in the majority, everybody, because of what's going on in the world. When everything is taken away and life and death is really what the issue becomes, people will be in great fear not knowing what is happening, not knowing why it's happening to them, not knowing where their next meal may be. All these things are going to create great fear within mankind.

Well, this is talking something about spiritual because "The LORD is my helper." Well, we know that God's holy spirit can be given to us if we ask. Because it's not about just God gives us His spirit and then we just go on physically. No, this is a spiritual battle we are in. "The Eternal is my helper." It's God that can provide His holy spirit. God can provide the fruits of the spirit that we can bear out to the benefit of others.

"I will not fear." So, you have nothing to fear. You have nothing to fear. We have nothing to fear if we stay close to God and we continue to repent of sin.

Now, the fear that is being spoken of here is, **What can man do to me?** Because, yes, man can take the physical component of our life. Yes, we may end up being in great difficulty, and yes, our life may be taken. Well, it was God's decision because we're in God's hands. Because God said, "I will never leave you." It's about whether or not we choose to leave God.

"What can man do to me?" What can man do to us? Well, they can do a lot of things, and they've attacked the Church, and there've been many of people that have been through many a trial because of mankind, but the end result is what can man do? Man cannot take away what God has promised us, which is life in Elohim as a spirit being. Man can't take that away from us.

But we can choose to give it up, "Let no man take your crown." Somebody can take our crown because of choices that we make. Someone can cause us to make this decision. The reality is that they can't take it away from us, but trials could come along where we could make a decision to leave God.

So, what can man do to us? Nothing. Man can take our life. So? We still have Yahweh Elohim as the Eternal Great God who has promised "I will never leave you." No matter what happens to us in this life we are always to respond in a godly manner. Trials are going to come our way. Well, the important part of that trial, really, is about the spiritual component, how we respond. So, yes, we may be reviled, yes, many things may happen to us, but it's how we respond back is the key. That's what God is looking at, is about our heart. What is it that we've transformed so far? The natural carnal mind will respond a particular way because it's natural. Well, we are to respond in a different way.

So, what can man do to us? The reality is, absolutely nothing on a spiritual level, absolutely nothing.

The purpose of this sermon is to explore whether we really believe the statement God has made, which is "I will never leave you." The title of the sermon today is *I Will Never Leave You*.

Were going to start by looking at an aspect here, Jacob, in **Genesis 28:11**.

Genesis 28:11—So, he (Jacob) came to a certain place, and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. So, it's getting late, he's decided it's time to rest, sleep. **He took one of the stones of that place, and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.** Now, if you've ever tried to sleep with a stone you know that it would give you a bad neck. So, he's probably rolled up a blanket or something like that. Doesn't say. But he's rolled something up and he's probably rested on it and there because it's softer. But he's gone to sleep.

We understand it's "Jacob's Pillar Stone," that has been moved around the world in many places and still exists today.

Verse 12—Then he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, remembering this is a dream from God, and its top reached to the heaven, and there were angels of God

(messengers of God) **ascending and descending on it**. So, they're going up and down. In this dream he's seen angels going up and down this ladder. Not that they need a ladder.

Verse 13—And behold, the Eternal stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham your father... This is in descendency because his physical father, of course, was Isaac ...**and the God of Jacob**. So, the key point here is that this is Yahweh Elohim, the Eternal God that has a plan and He has worked with certain people - Abraham, Isaac, and now He's going to be working with Jacob.

And the land on which you lie, which you're now sleeping on, I (Yahweh Elohim) **will give to you and your descendants**. Now, we understand that Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and then, of course, Jacob had twelve sons which are the twelve tribes of Israel.

Verse 14—Also, your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth, there's going to be millions and millions of them. **You shall spread abroad in the west, and to the east, to the north, and to the south**. So, all over the world they're going to move, and that's where they're going to be.

And in you (Jacob), and your seed, which is from the twelve tribes of Israel at this point, it's physical blessings, **all the families of the earth shall be blessed**. So, these physical blessings that are going to be given to the twelve tribes of Israel. They were different, of course, as we understand.

Now, this is not talking about something that is just one group of people from Isaac, because we understand now in the New Testament that it's all mankind. Everyone has the opportunity once they are called.

Behold, I am with you... This is an important part. Now, God can be with somebody for a purpose, and we're going to look at an account of that, where there is a purpose that something is going to be achieved, therefore, God will be with them and He won't leave them. But at some point, He will, as we've read it with Saul, where God was with Saul and at some point, God withdrew His spirit, so God was no longer with him.

Because God is working out a purpose. God can be with somebody for a period of time for a purpose, to achieve an outcome. Where with us it's a spiritual outcome, therefore, God will never leave us unless we leave Him because of a choice. But here in the history of mankind God has used people for a particular reason to achieve something, and then God leaves them. But He was with them and works things out with them to achieve an outcome.

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go forever. He's going to be "to keep you wherever you go." So, wherever he goes, God is going to be there. **And will bring you back to this land**, which happened, **and I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you**. Now, that can apply in different degrees. Because certain things can be achieved where God wants it achieved, and then it's achieved, and then He will leave until it's achieved.

Well, here is God saying, “Well, until it’s all achieved.” Well, we know that what was achieved through Jacob, through Israel, which carries on today, spiritual Israel.

There is a question which we as individuals alone can answer because it’s an individual thing. That question is: Do we really believe that God will never leave or forsake us? So, do we really believe this promise? Do we believe what God has said? Do we really believe that the only thing that can go wrong is us and that God doesn’t leave us?

There is a spiritual principle which is covered when we look at the life of a king in Judah. And the background to this: Solomon had reigned in Jerusalem for forty years and then he died. Then Rehoboam reigned over Jerusalem for seventeen years and Jeroboam reigned over the other tribes, the other ten tribes in the north. When Rehoboam died then Abijah reigned and then Abijah, I think it is, died and his son Asa reigned in Judah.

We’re going to pick up the story now in 2 Chronicles 14:1 and it’s the story about Asa, another way to put it “’Ā·sā.” In Hebrew it’s a little bit different, spelled a little bit different as well.

2 Chronicles 14:1—So Abijah rested with his father, and when he died, they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place. In his day the land was quiet ten years. Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Eternal his God. Now, this is something not on a spiritual level, because we know it requires God’s holy spirit. But a person can choose to obey God on a physical level.

Now, it’s something the natural carnal mind generally would rebel against, but there are some people that see certain things in God’s word, they’re allowed to, but it’s still physical and they see it. For example, baptism, can be a Sabbath keeper, Seventh-day Adventists. They see these things, but it’s not a spiritual thing. It’s not a calling from God where they see spiritually. It’s something physical.

Asa, of course, is now doing all this on a physical level and there’s a blessing connected to that.

For he removed the altars of the foreign gods, and the high places, and broke down the sacred pillars, and cut down the wooden images. Now, that’s something physical.

So, we’re now to look at this on a spiritual level. We’re called, we come into the Body of Christ, we’re placed in the Body under Joshua the Messiah, the head of the Church, and what are we to do? Well, we’re to pull down or to remove all of these idols, these foreign gods that we have. We’re to break down the things in our life which is sin, we’re to break them down and we’re to fight against them and overcome them. We’re to cut them down, in other words, cut them off.

This is something physical, but for us it’s about removing the idols that we have set up in our thinking. Now, there are many of them. When we’re first called, we don’t see those idols. We might see some basic ones, but there’s a lot of others that we have, things that we do. The biggest idol, of course, is self, and that takes years and years to pull down. Years to pull down.

The reality is we never ever fully overcome and pull that idol down. Self is always in existence while we have human life. Well, our goal in life is to do here what Asa did, which is to pull things down, to pull them down.

Verse 4—He commanded Judah to seek the Eternal, the LORD God of their fathers. Now, this is an incredible thing, really. You have a king here who now turns around and commands the people that this is what they should do. Now, you can imagine that where we can have a modern government today where somebody turned around and said, “Okay, we are to seek the Lord God of our fathers and you’re to pull down all the idols and we’re all to become Sabbath keepers.” That’s going to go down really well because natural man, of course, what God’s plan is, to leave man to himself. Well, he doesn’t want to do it; the natural mind doesn’t want to do it.

Here is God really working with someone, with Asa to get something achieved. So, this is all pulled down, **and to observe the law and the commandments.** Well, you wouldn’t be able to say that today because retail would be up in arms. Everyone would be voting against you and there’d be demonstrations about it, if you said this.

He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah; and the kingdom was quiet under him. Because God’s intervened. God has the power to allow things to happen in the sense of wars to take place for an outcome, and to make peace or to give peace to a nation or a kingdom because it’s achieving something. There’s a blessing with this physical obedience that Asa has done.

This is what Asa has done. **Verse 6—And he built fortified cities in Judah: for the land had rest. He had no war in those years because the Eternal had given him rest. Therefore, he said to Judah, Let us build these cities and make walls around them.** Because there are no wars going on so let’s get ready for war, in other words. Let’s build things up while it’s quiet. ... **and the towers, and the gates, and the bars, while the land is yet before us.** In other words, there’s nothing going on so it’s a good time to build, because it’s quiet from a war point of view.

Because we have sought the Eternal our God, we have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side. So, it’s God that can give the peace. Now, we know that there’s going to be a massive war and then when Joshua the Messiah returns with 144,000 there is still going to be death and destruction for a period of time because God has said that He will destroy those who are destroying the earth through Joshua the Messiah.

We can see now that God is going to give peace to mankind, but before it there’s going to be a big war. There’s going to be a lot of death before peace comes to this earth.

So, they built and prospered. Now, that is the key statement. “They built and prospered.” What’s our calling about? Building so that we prosper spiritually. This is not physical, this is spiritual.

What are we to do spiritually? Well, we're to build godly character by choice. That's a really important thing. We can build godly character by choice. Because it is a choice. Whether we want to fight or not, we fight our human nature, it's a choice. We can go each day with nothing. We can have no prayer life. We can not fast. We can do all those things by choice. But if we choose to fast, to deny our self, to seek God while we're fasting, if we are to seek God through prayer, it's a choice; a choice of what time and when and how is all up to us as individuals.

None of us can turn around and make an excuse before God because we have physical life; there is 24-hours in a day, and we have all the weapons of the warfare, what we're to take on. As we know, in scripture it talks about putting these things on.

Here we see a physical kingdom building for the future. Well, we are to build for the future. It's our choice.

Verse 8—And Asa had an army of three hundred thousand from Judah who carried shields and spears, and from Benjamin, two hundred and eighty thousand men. So, we're looking at a total of five hundred and eighty thousand men of war. Because that's physical. That's about what you can set up for yourself to protect yourself. ...and carry shields and drew bows. All these were mighty men of valour.

Then Zerah, the Ethiopian, came out against them with an army of one million men and three hundred chariots. So, when you look at it, he's outnumbered almost two to one. He's outnumbered. **And he came to Mareshah.**

Verse 10—So, Asa went out against him, and set up the troops in battle array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

Verse 11, which is a key scripture: **And Asa cried out to the Eternal his God.** This is something on a physical; he's realized he's outnumbered and he's going to get beaten when you look at the number of Ethiopians that are there. He's now doing something we have to do, not rely on self but to turn to God. It's time to turn to God.

During this period from now to the return of Joshua the Messiah, how much more important is it? Now is the time to turn to God. Because what is coming is like this, a million men coming against us. You look at it and think, well, this is a spiritual battle. The evil spirits are going to be against us.

But God has said, "I will never leave you. I'm with you. So, what can man do?" So, what can an evil spirit realm do if we stay close to God. We have the weapons of warfare, spiritual warfare. God's outlined them in scriptures. So, what can man do? What can an evil angel do if we stay close to God? Because God is for us; who can be against us?

Verse 11 again, **and Asa cried out to the Eternal his God and said, LORD, it is nothing for You to help.** It's nothing for God to do these things, what he's looking for. **...whether with many, or**

with those who have no power, help us. Now, we know that we have no power of and by ourselves. The natural carnal mind is weak. But with God and God's holy spirit we can achieve a lot. We can achieve a lot. We can take on God's very thinking.

O Eternal, our God; for we rest on You. This is what we're in. This is a time to cry out to God and put our rest, our hope in God. Because God is the only who who's going to get us through all of this, what is coming.

Oh LORD our God; for we rest on You and in Your name we go against this multitude. So, in the name of God, the Church of God—PKG. We are God's people. Church of God—PKG is an organization. It's a physical organization, the name. But we are the Church of God. We are the called-out ones of God; therefore, we stand against what is coming. We stand.

Because we're always going to be Sabbath keepers even if it cost us our life. We're always going to keep the Holy Days, even if it's at home. But we're always going to do that even if it costs us our life. We are going to fast selectively and turn to God in prayer even if it costs us our life. So, what can man do to us? Absolutely nothing.

How do we stand against the multitude of evil spirits, the multitude of mankind influenced by Satan and his demons? How? Well, we turn to God because God has said, "I will never leave you..." the rest of it is "but." What are we going to choose?

O Eternal, You are our God; do not let man prevail against You. Because this is God's battle. God is going to create a family. God is going to have people live on into the Millennium. God will achieve that.

Well, what can prevail against God's plan? Nothing. There is nothing that can prevail against God's plan. It is going to happen. Joshua the Messiah is going to return. There is going to be 144,000. There is going to be a group of called-out ones that live into the Millennium. The Millennium will happen. The Last Great Day will happen. The resurrections will happen. There will be an end to it, which is a second death, and the evil angels will be destroyed and there will be a family under God, under Joshua the Messiah. Nothing can stop that. Absolutely nothing! No matter what Satan does, no matter what man tries to do, nothing can prevail against God. He is the Almighty!

We have the Almighty on our side and He has said, "I will never leave you." What can man do to us? Absolutely nothing.

Verse 12—So, the Eternal struck the Ethiopians before Asa, and Judah; and the Ethiopians fled. Isn't that incredible? Turning to God is this answer to everything. Here is something physical that a king does. He turns to God.

What about us? We've been called. We're begotten sons of God not yet born. It's time to turn to God. Because it's close, it's very close, and it's going to happen.

And Asa and the people who were with him pursued them to Gerar. So, the Ethiopians were overthrown, and they could not recover. And they were broken before the Eternal and His army. Well, we actually are part of that army. Some are to be born into a spirit life, but the army of God on a physical level is the Church of God. It's the Church of God, those called, because we make up and we're in that spiritual warfare, therefore, we are the army. ...and they carried away very much spoil/plunder. "They" of course, is Judah.

Verse 14—Then they defeated all the cities around Gerar, for the fear of the Eternal came upon them. And they plundered all the cities; for there was an exceedingly great spoil in them.

Verse 15—So, they attacked the livestock enclosures and carried off sheep and camels in abundance and returned to Jerusalem.

The spiritual principle that we're going to look at today was already covered in 2 Chronicles 15. So, this is what we're going to look at now, is this principle.

2 Chronicles 15:1—Now, the spirit of the Eternal came upon Azariah the son of Oded, and he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. So, this is the spiritual principle: **The Eternal is with you while you are with Him.** God is with us while we choose to obey His voice. And really, what it comes down to is hearing. Because it's like the 57 Truths, we can hear them, we can see them, but have we implemented them into our life?

Because if we haven't, that's a spiritual problem. Because we can hear God's voice, "Ah, yes, God says to do 'this' and do 'that' and not to do 'that,'" all for our spiritual benefit, "These things will make you unhappy." "These things will make you happy," on a physical level. Well, spiritually it's the same. We have to now take these truths that God has given us—which are all spiritual. You can read them on a physical level. So, a person could read them, we could read them and not implement them. Well, that means, it means nothing. We've not heard God. It's not just a matter of listening to the words, it's actually implementing it into our life.

The Eternal is with us, with you, while you are with Him. God is with us while we are with Him. We've got to stay close.

Continuing on in **verse 2**—**If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.** Now, that's the spiritual principle that we're looking at today, is about making sure that we do not forsake God. We have different ways of making sure that we don't forsake God. Well, He's always going to be there. God will always be there and it's a matter of whether or not we are willing to have that relationship with God by seeking Him.

Verse 3—**For a long time, Israel had been without the true God, without a teaching priest, and without law.** Now, Israel had forsaken God and God's ways.

Sin cuts us off from God until we repent and that is a choice. That is something that God blesses us with, the gift of repentance. Well, we can see that gift, we know we should repent. It's a matter of whether we do or not.

Well, God has provided us "a teaching priest." We have a prophet. How many eras have had a prophet, when you look at it? How many eras have had a prophet? Well, we know of two. Because we've been given a teacher. We've been given a teacher. God has revealed truth through an apostle. How incredible is that?

And before then, of course, we didn't have the law. Now we have the law, the spiritual law in our minds. We know it's a law of love. Everything is about the law of love. Therefore, anything that is contrary to that is sin. The opposite of love is hate, ill will.

Verse 4—But when in their trouble, or when in their distress, **they turned**, which means Israel here, it's talking about Judah, and Israel had done this at time, **they looked to God**, which was this physical repentance. Now, physical repentance has happened in different times at different parts of the Bible, you see there's a physical repentance, where it happens, and people repent. Well, here, of course, under this king, the people did turn to God and there was a physical repentance.

...they turned to God, the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, and He was found by them. Now, that's really important, that we have to turn. They looked to God - physical. We are to look to God - spiritual, something on a spiritual level.

Sin cuts us off from God, but by repentance we then can have a relationship with God. We understand that, and it's been preached a lot about being repentant, about this overcoming sin, that we can do this by prayer and fasting and by truly being sorry. Because when we transgress God's law on a spiritual level it's not a physical sorrow. Generally, physical sorrow is because someone's been caught. This is a spiritual thing, and it requires God's holy spirit.

Verse 5—And in those times there was no peace to the one who went out. There's someone who left Israel, there was no peace, **nor to the one who came in**, which is entered Israel, **but great turmoil was on all the inhabitants of the land.** Why? Because of sin. Because without sin there's peace. But with sin, drama, there is no peace. So, sin is the problem.

Nations were destroyed, which was "to shake violently; to beat; to break; to break in pieces; to crush." **Nations were destroyed by nation.** So, God would raise up an army and would punish Israel for their sin, Israel and Judah.

...and city by city, for God troubled them with every adversity. So, there is always adversity coming on them because of their sin, because they're unwilling to repent. But when it got really bad, they would turn to God on a physical level.

Well, we shouldn't be waiting that long. We should be examining ourselves every day to make sure that we are in unity with God's word in our mind.

But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded. I found that really encouraging. We are to be strong and we're not to give up. We're not to be looking, "Oh, it's all too hard." It is hard. Don't get me wrong. It is hard. It's meant to be hard because it's fighting selfishness. The easy way is to give in to self.

But something here that was said, "Your work shall be rewarded." It's an incredible thing because it's a spiritual thing, that the work that we do on a spiritual level will be rewarded. We know what that reward is. God is "bringing many sons to glory." Men and women, we're just going to be children of God. We're begotten at the moment but at the work that we're doing now, if we're putting in the effort and actually working on ourselves spiritually through this prayer and fasting and turning to God, it will be rewarded in a point in time. It will be rewarded.

It's rewarded now. We don't often see that reward. But there is actually a reward now because of our conduct towards others and how we're living love to others. So, there's a reward to benefit others and there's a reward to us because we're building character, we're changing the thinking. That's the reward. But there is a reward to come, which is life in Elohim.

Our desire and work of striving to overcome sin will be rewarded. We are not to give up even when we fail or fall, which happens often. We're not to give up. We're to dust ourselves off, as it says, and we are then to continue on, try harder next time, "I'm going to do better next time."

Verse 8—And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and from the cities which he had taken in the mountains of Ephraim, and he restored the altar of the Eternal, that was before the vestibule, which is the arch or the porch, of the Eternal.

Now, we are to remove all those abominable things. We are to remove sin from our life. Now, we should be encouraged by this statement, which God says, "I will never leave you." Well, that should then make us bold and think, "That's right! God is there. The problem is me. The problem is me because I'm the one who chooses not to fast. I'm the one who chooses not to pray. I'm the one who chooses selfishness. It's not God, it's me. I'm the problem."

God has said, "I will never leave you," unless we sin and don't repent. Then God says He'll withdraw His spirit. Because God can't dwell with sin.

Verse 9—Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those who dwell with them from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon, and they came over to him in great numbers from Israel. The other king wouldn't have been too happy about this, I'm sure. ...when they saw that the Eternal his God was with him. So, people were drawn now to the blessings that God was giving to this kingdom.

Now, what we can learn from this on a spiritual level is one person's actions of obedience to God can impact another person's thinking. Now, we don't often see this but it's a real thing. It

happens in God's Church. It happens in the world, that people see these things about how a person's living. The outcome of this way of life that we are now choosing to live that God has called us to, there will be this impact in the future. That the person is going to see it, but the impact may not be instant. But one day they'll go, "Ah, that's right. I remember. I remember those people." Because that's the future.

But here we can see even now within God's Church a person's actions of being diligent, of being obedient, of all the things that we know we are to be battling, and another person in the Body sees it, they're encouraged because of it and they'll be drawn to God. Not drawn to the person - they may be that as well on a physical level - but drawn to God because it's God that is changing the person.

A person's actions now in the Body of Christ can impact another person's thinking to glorify God, to give God the credit for what God is changing in that person because of their choices. But the person can see it and then go, "Hmmm" and think about themselves a bit and then overcome the sin that they may have.

So, they gathered together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year in the reign of Asa. And they offered to the Eternal at that time, seven hundred bulls, which that's seven hundred bulls and seven thousand sheep from the spoil they had brought. Then they entered into an agreement (covenant) to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their life. Same for us. This is something physical.

They're going to set out now to seek God. Well, how did they do that? Well, they would then think, listen to the commandments and implement those things into their life, those physical things.

Well, we as God's people are more accountable from the point of view of, we know better than the physical. We know the spiritual. We are to "enter into an agreement," which we have already done at baptism, "to seek the LORD God of their fathers." We're to seek God, Yahweh Elohim, of whom we have a personal relationship. They didn't have a personal relationship with God. We can. We should have.

They were "to seek God with all their heart," which is all their thinking. That's what their mind was dwelling on, how their day was. So, how's this? What's our day like? What am I saying? How am I saying it? "and with all their lives." They implemented it into their life. In other words, it takes action.

So, it's like the truth. We can hear the truth. We can see the truth. But unless we've implemented it into our thinking and our life and the way we're now living, which is different than everybody else in the world, it's all worthless.

But here we see a people doing something physical. We are to do it spiritually.

And whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel was put to death. Imagine implementing that law today. Well, you can understand what this is being said. Well, anybody that does not seek God through prayer and fasting and genuine repentance puts themselves to death, really, because it's a spiritual death. They cut themselves off from the flow of God's holy spirit, and therefore, they die on a spiritual level in this physical life. Because there is no future unless they do repent. Whether it's in this life or whether it's in a second life that they will be granted, possibly, and it's not a willful sin, they have that opportunity.

And whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel was to be put to death, whether small or great. So, whether they were important or not important, **whether it was a man or woman.** Anybody that did not turn to God and follow the laws of God—this is all on a physical level—were actually put to death. That's a pretty horrendous thing when you look at that component of it, the way the world would see it today.

But the reality is this is spiritual in nature and the same thing applies. If we are unwilling to seek Yahweh Elohim now through prayer and fasting and through genuine repentance, we're putting ourselves to death. We're cutting ourselves off from God.

And they took an oath before the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting, and with trumpets, and a ram's horn. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, which is about this obedience to God. Which we've done at baptism. We said we'd given our life to God and that we were going to obey Him. Well, we've got to continue that battle. **For they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with their life; and He was found by them. And the LORD gave them rest all around.**

Well, that's physical. We know it's spiritual for us. The main spiritual principle was covered in **verse 2**, which I'm going to read again: **The LORD, Yahweh Elohim, is with you,** God is with us, God will never leave us; that's the promise, **while you are with Him.** God is with us while we choose to seek Him and obey His voice. **If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.**

2 Chronicles 16:7. So, we're just going to now look at something that happened in verse 7, and we'll look at verse 8 as well. It's important from the point of view of understanding that a person can start out strong in the things we've talked about, and at some point, can be one year, can be ten years, can be fifty years, give up on seeking the Eternal and repenting - prayer and fasting and repentance. It's an incredible thing, but it has happened. The history of the Church clearly says the majority have left the Body of Christ. The majority have fallen asleep or left the Body of Christ.

This is a message from a prophet to Asa. **2 Chronicles 16:7—And at that time Hanani the seer,** which is a prophet of God, **came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him, Because you have relied on the king of Syria...** Now, this is something that has happened, and he then turned, the king turned around and didn't look to God anymore. **...and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the king of Syria has escaped from your hand.**

So, this now is pointing to a point that yes, you can go all this way, but at some point, if you turn away or if we turn away and rely on something other than Yahweh Elohim, the Eternal God to save us (salvation wise), and possibly going through the future, to live on into the Millennium, there's a problem. Because here is the problem being said, what has happened.

In **verse 8** it's now looking back saying, **Were the Ethiopians**, which is a question, **Were the Ethiopians and the Lubims not a huge army?** Now, we saw that Zerah had a million men and there were 300,000 chariots, I think it was, **and every manner of chariots and horsemen?** So that's the question. Wasn't that? **Yet, because you relied on the LORD**, the Eternal, **He delivered them into your hand.**

At the time we rely on God to fight our battles for us everything will work out all to the benefit of us. It will work out. But the moment we turn away and try to rely on self and not rely on God, not turn on it, things will go bad for us.

Verse 9—For the eyes of the Eternal... Now, "the eyes of the Eternal," it's not God looking there and looking at everybody with His own eyes. It's talking about in a spirit realm, which are those that followed God, the two thirds, that they are on the earth representing God.

The eyes of the Eternal run to and fro through the whole earth to show Him strong, to show God strong, on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him, loyal to God.

We understand right now for the fact that I'm giving this, and the fact that in the future this will be heard by the brethren, that there are angels, "the eyes of the Eternal" that are there. They are there. Now, we live our life not understanding. We always look at the physical and think all the physical things that are going on in our life. But the reality is that at that time there are evil angels on this earth that are broadcasting sin to our minds.

But at the very same time there is an angelic realm, "the eyes of the Eternal," which we would say "the good angels," that are there that are looking at what's going on. They are observing things and they do report to God at different times. We know that from Job, I think it is, where, you know, there's times when the angels report.

Well, God knows everything anyway because of the power of His spirit and because of His power, but He has allocated these roles to an angelic realm. And yes, they are here. Yes, there are angels around us at this very time. It's an exciting thing if we were to just stand back and look at reality because we don't often look at reality. We think reality is this physical earth; this is reality. The reality is spirit! What we're going to enter into. That is the reality! That's what we desire. We desire to live on. We desire another life, which the angels, good angels will continue on. We understand the destiny of Satan and the evil angels.

So, in 2 Chronicles it says, **The eyes of the Eternal run to and fro throughout all the earth.**

I'm just going to refer to it. I'll read it, but it's in **Proverbs 15:3—The eyes of the Eternal are in every place, keeping watch on evil and the good.** So, the angels are observing the evil,

those that are breaking God's law (and that's the vast majority, of course, of mankind), and the good. Well, one would think that the good on the spiritual level is coming from God's people who have been called to do good.

Nothing is hidden from God. That's a spiritual principle. Nothing is hidden from God.

Job 34:20—For His eyes are on the ways of man, and He sees all his (man's) steps. God knows everything. God knows when a bird falls to the earth. But He has allocated roles to the angelic realm, the good angelic realm, to observe and to be around, and often to intervene on behalf of God's people to protect them. There are many things that have happened in life where angels intervene, and we don't even know that they have intervened on our behalf because God has instructed them to protect us.

There's one example that happened to me. There's a couple, actually, in my life that I can remember. But I do remember one time when I first was in the Body of Christ and came into the Church under Worldwide days that somebody came around for a meal and their car broke down out the front and I said I'd go out and help them push it. It was ten o'clock at night or something. I think it was a Friday night, if I remember rightly, and we were in a country town in Western Australia.

Anyway, I went out and I started to push this car and I went up around a corner and started to push this car and it started to go faster and faster and he'd jumped in and as we got a bit faster and faster and faster and then boom, it started, and he took off in first gear. In those days, not being an automatic, it was a manual, you could do it.

The next morning I woke up and I thought, I remember that road is slightly up hill. I remember going out and looking at it and sure enough, it was up hill, and there is no way that I could have pushed this car up this hill, up this slight incline. I realized that I'd had help. That's what I believe. Now, whether that was factual or not I don't know, but that's what I believe.

The other time was I remember I had some wellington boots on and I was using a chainsaw out here and it wasn't until two days later and I looked down at my wellington boot and the chainsaw had cut all the way through the top of the wellington boot. Not all the way through, but on the top of it. I don't even remember when it happened, but obviously, at some point the chainsaw had gone down through the log and must have hit my boot and it stopped. It's like, you know, a millimeter from cutting my big toe off.

I realize, you know, those sorts of things, who knows what's going on and why. But there's a lot of protection that is given to us, brethren, that we're not aware that God is intervening into our life all the time to protect us for reasons that God has. He won't leave us because He has a role for us. There's an outcome.

Other times things happen and people in the Church lose their life. God knows what He's doing.

So, we see from this verse, going back to **verse 9—The eyes of the Eternal**, which is the angelic realm, the good angelic realm, **run to and fro throughout all the whole earth, to show Himself, God's, strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him, to God.** We are those that are loyal to Him.

In this you have done foolishly. In turning away from God (he's talking to the king), turning away from God and relying on man. "You're just being really foolish to do that." To be self-reliant is really foolish. **Therefore, from now on you shall have wars.**

Verse 10—Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison. Natural carnal mind reaction. Then it says, **for he was enraged at him, at the prophet, because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time.** Now, you can see what this is really covering. It's talking about what you rely on in life. What do we rely on in life? Well, we're at a time now where it is time to turn to God and rely on Him. So, no matter what happens nothing can happen to us that is not for our spiritual benefit.

2 Chronicles 16:12, which is the end of the story here. **And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet...** It's really his grief, or his anxiety, or his sickness was severe. He's got disease in his feet: **yet in his disease he did not seek the Eternal.** Now, that's the key point. He didn't turn to God. He didn't look to God to intervene, to help, and to heal, **but the physicians.** Now, in times past people would say, "Look! There you go. Look, the physicians. That's the problem, the physicians, you're not to turn to the physicians."

Well, it's not that. The issue here was he could have had the physicians help out, you know, to clean the sores up and the wound, whatever it is that's wrong with his feet. But the issue really goes back to this point here, "he did not seek the Eternal." That's the issue. It's not about having doctors.

But in times past, it had been taught, "Look. There you go. That's proof that you're not to have doctors." No, this is just simply proof that you have to turn to God for everything. Every single thing in our life, we have to turn to God and seek God! Because it's spiritual!

So, if we have an illness, what do we do? It says go to the elders. Turn to the elders. Turn to God. God tells us that's what the process is. So, if we've got something wrong, we turn to God. But there's nothing wrong with then having it double-checked by a doctor, a physician, as long as we've turned to God first. Because that's the key - turn to God.

James 4. We're going to turn to James 4.

So, we can learn from that story that God is with us no matter what until we turn away from Him. God's always there. God's there. We know there's angelic realm there to help us if we're godly and repentant, dependant.

James 4:6—But He (God) gives more grace. Therefore, He says, God resists the proud. Tying this back into now why God leaves us, in the sense of we leave God first. God doesn't leave us.

“I will never leave you.” But there is a time where God can cut off the flow of His holy spirit on a spiritual level. Because **God resists the proud**, the people that think their self-important, they’re self-reliant, **but gives favor/grace to the humble**.

What does this mean on a spiritual level? Well, humility is really about we give all the credit for everything to God, everything we have, as access to, as far as possessions, we give glory and credit to God. It was God. It’s God’s creation. Anything else on a spiritual level, all the credit goes to God. It’s the fruit of God’s holy spirit. It’s not the fruit of our spirit. It’s the fruit of God’s holy spirit that’s borne out to benefit others. Anything that we have changed and chosen to change in our thinking, it’s because God’s given us the power to do it.

Humility is when we recognize that we depend on God for everything. We recognize God is the author of all this. It’s all passing unless we are changed to spirit.

Then God resists the proud because credit is given to self. It’s what “I” have done. It’s what “I” am doing. Look what “I” have as far as possessions. Credit given to self, self-reliant, relying and trusting on self. Relying on the money in the bank, that is pride. It’s relying on self not relying on God.

We will know and understand that of ourselves we can do nothing spiritually. Because only God is good. This is a level of humility.

When we understand that we of ourselves can’t do anything. We can do physical things, but we can’t do anything spiritual. There is no spiritual growth. There is no spiritual knowledge. There is no spiritual understanding of the truth, the real understanding. Because knowledge is knowledge; understanding is different. Then implementing that understanding into the life, well, we can’t do any of that without God. Well, that’s humility. When we turn to God and recognize, well, being thankful for the 57 Truths, the fact we understand them, we’ve implemented them, we give the thanks to God. All the glory goes to God, not to self.

James 4:7, therefore, how do we handle this? This is about pride versus humility. **Therefore, submit (yield) to God**, yield to the truth, resist, **stand against the devil**, Satan (Satan stands for pride), **and he will flee from you**.

This is the time now to turn to God. God says, “I will never leave you.” God will never leave us if we don’t leave Him. Well, now is the time to turn to God and Satan will flee from us because we’ve turned to God, we are totally dependant on God. Just as we saw at some point the king did that, and then at some point he didn’t. There’s never a time in our life where we should be self-reliant and rely on ourselves. We should always turn to God.

Verse 8—Draw near to God. How? Through prayer and fasting. **...and He will draw near to you**. So, we’ll have that access again to God. Because sin cuts us off. If we repent and turn to God and look to God to support us in everything, and I mean everything physical and spiritual, God will do it. God will do it. Remembering the principle that not all physical things are good for us.

Cleanse your hands, which is your actions, **you sinners; and purify your minds**, your thinking, **you double-minded**. Why does it say “double-minded?” Because there’s a carnal mind and then there’s God’s spirit. So, we have a double-mind because one part of it wants to go this way and another part says, “Well, that’s wrong. I should be going that way.” But it’s a choice which way we want to go. So, a double-minded person is somebody that is powered by God’s holy spirit, got a natural mind and got God’s spirit.

Lament, and mourn, and weep. Because it’s our choice whether we want to do this, repent of sin. **Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom**, to heaviness. **Humble yourselves...** Now, this humbling one’s self is to fight against the thinking, the thing that lifts us up, which is self, lifts self up. “I’m pretty good. I’m educated. I’m ‘this.’ I’m ‘that.’” “I’ve got more money than you.” “I’ve got a bigger house than you.” “My car is better than yours.” All those things are things of pride. Because if we’re really humble we would turn around and say, “Thank God that I have been granted the opportunity to use these things, and I pray that I never take it to self, that I never exalt myself against another person thinking that I did anything. Because it was God that granted it.” That’s why some physical things can be a trial. People don’t understand it. **...in the sight of the Eternal, and He will lift you up.**

Romans 8:28. Now, this scripture is something that I’ve referred to at different times. I generally smile when I refer to it. I refer to it because it’s a matter of whether a person fully understands this and really believes it. Because scripture can be there, but whether a person really believes the scripture, that’s a personal choice that each individual has to work through.

Romans 8:28—And we know... Now, this “know” is “to see and understand spiritually.” Because this is what the key of this scripture is. It’s about whether we really see it. **...that all things work together**, all things help. No matter what’s happening in our life, whatever trial we may be going through, that we see as a trial, it’s the best thing that could ever happen to you. Know what I’m saying? It’s the best thing that could happen to you. It’s the best thing that could happen to you if you understand or if we understand what it’s really about.

Because this is the time that we can see it on a spiritual level, which means it’s spiritual. So, it’s the best thing that happened to you if we look at it on a spiritual level. The physical is the physical, whatever trial of health, finance, difficulties, whatever it may be, it’s the best thing that could happen to us spiritually because we can turn to God.

Now is the time to turn to God, during this trial. But if we do like we read previously, and leave God out of the picture and just turn to the physical, try to resolve the issue all on a physical level, never mentioning it to God, never tabling it to God, never involving God in it, we’ve failed. We’ve failed just as we’re read before.

So, we know that all things work together to help for good to our spiritual benefit, in other words. Everything works to our spiritual benefit if (of course, the “if”), to our spiritual good, to **those who love God**, which we do.

Now, if we love God what do we do? We keep His commandments in the spirit and the law. That's what it is. So, if we love God, we will be keeping the commandments, we'll be striving to fight self, and we would be striving to live love to others, to think, well, the spirit of the law.

...to those who are the called, that's us. We are the called at this time. So, everything that is happening to us at this time is to our spiritual benefit if we turn to God. If we turn to God and involve Him, **according to His purpose**. We've been called for a purpose. God's purpose for us is that He has called us so that we could enter Elohim, His family, at a point in time. Now, that is a great benefit. Now, if we could just keep that in our mind all the time our life will be different.

Whatever trial we're going through, whether it's a trial of sickness, if we've involved God and we continue to involve God, even if it goes on and on and on and on until we die, if we involve God we are growing spiritually, which is much more important than being healed. If we're growing spiritually God's purpose in us is being fulfilled.

Now, that's why at times I do smile when I say, "Well, it's the best thing that could happen." Someone will say, "Oh, I've been having this trial and 'da-da-da-da-dah,'" and I say, "It's the best thing that ever happened to you!" Well, it is if you're in the Church, if you're in the Body and if you're close to God, because God won't leave us, if we've not left God it is the best thing because now it's giving us the opportunity, this trial is giving us the opportunity to draw close to God, to cry out to Him, to turn to Him. That's the important part of any trial, turning to God. Which, we read before, if you don't, things will go bad for you; go bad for me, go bad for you, go bad for all in the Body of Christ.

This scripture does not apply to the world. This scripture, Romans 8:28, applies to those that are called. It applies to those that are called.

Verse 29—For whom He (God) foreknew, which is to know beforehand. He knew that there was going to be a group of people at the end and these people were going to be in this period of time to live through into the Millennium or to be a part of the 144,000.

...**He also predetermined**, He decided beforehand that this would happen, **to be conformed**, to be fashioned, **to the image of His Son**, that he (Christ) **might be the firstborn among many brethren**. So, Joshua the Messiah is the firstborn among many to be born. Sons of God, begotten sons of God yet to be born. That's us. So, Christ is the first.

Well, God had this in His plan. We're part of God's plan. At this very time, we're part of God's plan. How incredible is that alone, that God is working with us? God is working with us now if we are willing to draw close to Him.

Verse 30—Moreover, whom He predetermined, them He also called. Whom He called, He also justified, which is "to render innocent," cover sin by Passover, which is Joshua the Messiah.

So, we've been justified because we've been called. Now we've been baptized so sin has been covered. Then ongoing, our sin is covered if we repent. Because of Passover, what's happened in Passover and now we have the ability to have access to God because we can now go to God's throne and repent before Him. **...and whom He justified, He also glorified.**

Now, people will have said in times past, "Well, how does that work out?" Well, we are glorified now because we have an aspect of God's mind now. So, we have the glory of God now. We carry the glory of God now. But of course, there is a future glory that will be given to us when we're changed to spirit.

Verse 31—What then shall we say to these things? What can you say? What can we say? What can anybody say when we look at this and say God has called us, He's given us this great opportunity, He's there, there's a spirit realm around us that's there to protect us, that's looking out after us, God's providing protection. So, what can we say? We know we can't tell anybody. What can we say?

Then there is a question: **If God is for us, who can be against us?** Now, that's an incredible statement. If God is for us, members of the body who are in this process of ongoing repentance, who can be against us? With all that God is doing for us, what God wants to give us (we can't earn it), what God wants to give us is a free gift, who, what can go wrong? The desire not to overcome self. That's what can go wrong.

Verse 32—He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him, talking about God, how shall He (God) with him also freely give us all things? It's incredible what has been promised to us. And yet the things that we do are often just our nature and we've got to fight against it. So, God is there, and He says He will never leave us, so the rest of it is up to us, really, what we do.

Deuteronomy 31:6. Now, this is Moses speaking to Joshua. **Be strong and of good courage, do not fear, nor be afraid of them. For the LORD your God, Yahweh Elohim, He is the one who goes before you, or goes with you. He will not leave you, nor forsake you.** So, Moses is now saying something to Joshua to encourage him, to be strong and to be of good courage.

We are the same. Brethren, we are the same. Be strong and of good courage because God will not leave us. God will not leave us. He will go with us as long as we do not forsake or leave Him. That's as clear as this.

God says He's with us. He's got angels around to help us. He's there developing something that can be transformed (the mind), that can be transformed so that one day we can enter Elohim, but when He says, "Now I know you." Whether it's soon or whether it's in the future.

Verse 7—Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of Israel, Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them. And you shall cause them to inherit it. Well, we know that the land is symbolic, this promised land here was really pointing to a future, which is a family,

which is a land, spiritual life in Elohim. Which is really what it's talking about. The promised land is this inheritance that we have not yet inherited. But that's something that we want to inherit.

Verse 8—And the LORD, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you. He will not leave you, nor forsake you. Do not fear, nor be dismayed. Now, we're entering a time when there is going to be great fear and great dismay in this world because of what's going to happen. For a period of time it's going to be horrendous. Well, we are to take courage. We are to be strong. We are to stand for God, to stand for God's way of life.

We will be Sabbath keepers; no matter what happens in this world we will be Sabbath keepers till the end. Yes, we will keep the Holy Days the best we can in whatever environment we are in for that period. Yes, we will keep all of the Holy Days no matter what happens, no matter how bad it gets. Yes, we are not going to lie and be deceitful. Yes, we are going to live godly to others with what is coming because there's going to be a lot of pressure not to live godly toward others.

We are to be encouraged because God is the Almighty. God is almighty. He says He won't leave us, so we should be strong and of good courage. Yes, if God is for us, who can be against us? Well, there isn't anything.

So, one way to move forward for us, brethren, is held in a scripture in Matthew 7:7. Now, this is looking at something spiritual, and it's not physical, it's something spiritual. This is what we need in our life going forward.

Matthew 7:7—Ask, and it... Now, this is talking about God's thinking, spiritual understanding, and the ability to bear fruit, spiritual fruit to the benefit of others. So, it's not talking about ask for a car, ask for a new house, ask for more money, ask to win lottery, whatever. It's not about that. This is all about asking for the fruits of the spirit to be lived in us, God living in us out to the benefit of others.

Ask, and it, which is God's character, **will be given to you. Seek...** Now, "seek" means action. If we're to lose a coin out in the lawn or grass area or a piece of gold, you would seek it. What does that mean? You don't stand here and just look at it. You go out and you work hard.

So, this is about asking God. **Seek God.** How do we seek God? Through prayer and fasting. We seek Him. **...and you will find.** That's exciting! That you'll find it. That we will find what we're looking for, which is spiritual character, not to think the way we think about certain matters but to change the way we think. Well, if we ask God about it, raise it to Him, and seek it through prayer and fasting and repentance, it will be given to us. It's a promise from God.

...knock— Which means you're going to have to do something about it. You've got to go up there and say, "I want to enter. I want this! I want this. This is all the actions I'm doing. I want Your nature. I want Your character. I want Your holy spirit." **—and it shall be opened to you.**

It'll be opened in the mind. The power of God's holy spirit will provide the thinking that we need.

Verse 8—For everyone who asks receives. Do we really believe this? Do we really believe this? **For everyone who asks**, so, we're going to ask for certain things, **receives from God**. Because God wants to give it. But God wants to see us, whether we want it. Will we ask? Will we seek it? Will we knock on that door? Turn to God, in other words?

And he who seeks finds. And to him who knocks it will be opened. The thing is, it takes effort, it takes a desire to do these things.

Verse 9—Or what man is there among you who if his son asks for bread gives him a stone? Well, we ask for bread, spiritual bread, the bread of life. We know Joshua the Messiah was that. But we ask for spiritual food, which is the bread of life, we ask for that, the word of God. That's what we want. We want it dwelling in our minds so we're to ask.

We're going to go back just quickly now and have a look at **2 Chronicles 24:19—Yet He (God) sent prophets to them, to Judah, to bring them back to the Eternal; and they, the prophets, testified against them: but they would not listen.** This is incredible, that we are actually in this time now. God has sent a prophet and what has happened? In other words, "You will listen, God will listen." It's written.

Do we see that the witness, has the same witness here, that God has done all this time, but they would not listen? They would not listen. It's exactly today. The carnal mind is selfish, and it just wants to go down a particular path. Now, there could be a physical repentance, but that's not happening either. There's no physical repentance taking place, it's just they would not listen.

Well, it's exactly the same today as it has done, the history of mankind, 6,000 years, it's God has provided a witness and they would not listen. No one repented. Not even on a physical level does it take place.

Then the spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, Thus says God, Why do you transgress the commandments of the Eternal, so that you cannot prosper? Well, this principle applies. We are to turn to God and to seek Him and to ask—and it will be given to us—but we can't prosper spiritually if we're not willing to ask and if we're not willing to obey, to implement it into our minds and to obey the commandments as far as an intent is concerned, the intent of the law.

What is the intent of the law? The intent of the law is love, love to all. Love God, love others, love mankind.

So, this principle applies to us. We can't prosper spiritually if we're not willing to fight our self.

Because you have forsaken the Eternal, He has also forsaken you. It's because we forsake God, God stands back. He can't give us the flow of His spirit because we refuse to repent of sin.

It is sin that affects our relationship with God. If we do not repent, we choose to leave God. God will not leave us, but we by our unrepented sin choose to leave God.

I'll work towards a conclusion now. God states something to the captives of Israel, and we know that we came out of captivity, which is a spiritual captivity. If you'd like to turn to Jeremiah 29:10. We're looking to this as on a spiritual level, understanding that it's physical what had happened. But we are spiritual Israel.

Jeremiah 29:10—For thus says the LORD, the Eternal, After seventy years are completed at Babylon I will visit and perform My good word towards you and cause you to return to this place. Now, they'd been taken off into captivity.

Well, we were in captivity before our calling. Our minds were locked into selfishness. Couldn't do anything else, can't do anything else because that's the way we were created. Well, now God has said, "I'm now visiting you. I'm calling you and drawing you," drawing us out of the world, to come out of this captivity, and now we are to be transformed. Now God is saying, "Well, I won't leave you. I've drawn you out. I won't leave you. Now it's time for you to return to me," to return—we've never been there with God—but now to return, to return to obedience, which we've never done, of course, but now we are to come to God.

Verse 11—For I know the thoughts that I think, this is God speaking, towards you, says the Eternal, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Well, we'll look at that spiritually. It's the same thing. God's thinking towards us is good. It says it's thoughts of peace, not evil. Because God wants to give us peace. We can have a level of peace now, but we can have peace for eternity, life everlasting in the future. God wants to give us a future and a hope. We have a future promise, but we've got a hope now. We live in hope. We hope for salvation, but our future is salvation.

Verse 12—Then you will call upon Me, and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. So, this goes back to what we read in James where if we are to seek God, God will listen, God will hear. We know in Isaiah God talks about fasting and "Is this the fast that I have chosen," you know. This is about personal repentance.

Verse 13—And you will seek Me, and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. This is a promise from God that He's there, He's there. It's about whether or not we want to have that relationship with God.

1 Samuel 12:20—Then Samuel said to the people, Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness, yet do not turn aside from following the Eternal. This is, "You have done all these things that are wrong," yes, we've made mistakes in our life, but we can repent and turn to God, follow the Eternal.

But serve the LORD with all your heart. So, change! That's what God is saying. Change. We are to change. So, no matter what we've done wrong we can repent, we can change.

...and do not turn aside, for then you would go after empty things. I love that scripture. If you continue where you are, you're going to go after empty things. Because everything without God is empty, it's just futile. It's pointless having wealth or big car, all the physical things, or importance and stature and titles, and all those things. It's all empty things if God's not involved. It really is just empty. They're just worthless.

...and do not turn aside, and then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver. Because we're here about deliverance. We're here being delivered from captivity and we want to be born again into a spirit life. **...for they are nothing.** So, everything of this is all nothing. It's all vanity. It's all a waste of time unless we involve God. Then it has a purpose - spiritual growth. So, the trial, whatever it is, all has a purpose if we involve God in it.

Verse 22—For the LORD will not forsake His people for His great name's sake. This is the Church of God. These are God's people. We are God's people. We are God's people. **...because it has pleased the Eternal to make you His people.** Spiritual. Not physical, spiritual. It pleased Him to call us. It pleased Him that we are part of the Body of Christ. That's what He wants. He has a purpose. He has a plan; it will be fulfilled. With or without us it will be fulfilled because it is going to boil down to our choice, what we're going to do.

Moreover, as for me, Far be it for me that I should sin against the Eternal in ceasing to pray for you. So, we should have this concern for one another on a spiritual level. **But I will teach you the good and the right way.** So, here it is, this is the way to walk, this is the way to live, this is the way to think. Trust in God. Rely on God. Turn to God. It's time to do it.

Verse 24—Only fear the Eternal, and serve Him in truth, which we have, with all your heart. For consider what great things He has done for you. We should be thankful. No matter what it is that has happened to our life so far at this point in time, it's the best thing that's happened to us if...if we look at it on a spiritual level and are turning to God during that trial.

But if you will still do wickedly, you shall be swept away. In other words, there's no life for us. It's a waste. It's all just empty things and it's all going to change. If we're not going to turn around either this time or in the future, turn to God, we will be swept away. We will die. **... both you and your king.**

The fact is God will never leave us, but we can choose to leave God.