

The current series that we're covering, *Healing, Believing, and True Faith*, we're continuing today with this being *Part 5*.

Last Sabbath we ended at the verse that's been understood not all that well in many respects by the Church in times past, so we're going to review it again today here because it's one we read every Passover, in 1 Corinthians 11. That's where we ended last Sabbath. I want to begin there today.

1 Corinthians 11:27—Therefore, whoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. So again, that's about sin. That's what it's talking about, whether or not we're guilty of the death of Christ because all sin required that sacrifice in the sense that if we want to be forgiven that's what had to take place. We need to repent of sin on a regular basis in the sense of when it occurs in our lives, that we're not looking at ourselves, especially before Passover, but it should be something we do all the time. But the point is we're to focus on it at this time of year even more so because we should be more sobered by it. We focus more on the purpose of why Christ died for us.

It's saying here we don't want to take the Passover in an unworthy manner because that means there is sin in our life that we haven't repented of, and we haven't been looking at ourselves as we should, and we're letting something slide or go by the wayside here or "winking an eye" at or continuing to repeat.

Repentance isn't just a matter of words in saying, "I want to be forgiven." There has to be fruit that follows it. The fruit is that we obey God. The fruit is that we're asking God for His holy spirit and we're fighting against those things that are a part of our human nature that cause the sin in the first place. That's what true repentance is. Repentance isn't just a matter of something that some churches in the world do, when we talk about "confession" and things of that nature, it's not like that whatsoever.

This means that fruit has to follow, and if fruit doesn't follow then we really haven't repented in spirit and in truth because it's a matter of crying out to God for help not to repeat those things. It doesn't mean that someone isn't going to slip, do something. But to continue to practice something that is not being repented of constantly until it's conquered, another story.

It says, **But let a person examine themselves.** That's what we're to do. We focus on that before Passover but all the time to look at self. It's so easy to look at others and find fault

with others, and so much of the book of James is about this very thing. It's about sin, it's about relationships, and it's about judging others and being harsh on others and hard on others and not living God's way of life toward others like we should. That's what this is covering as well in that respect, in a summarized way.

Let a person examine themselves, and so let them eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For whoever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks... It says "**damnation**" in a lot of translations, but it's a matter of **judgment** which leads to what some refer to as "damnation" I guess, but it leads to a judgment. Unrepented sin, obviously, we know the end of the story; just like we read in James, it's fire.

...eats and drinks judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body. What an incredible thing. Not understanding why he went through what he did. Not grasping and comprehending it. That's why I marvel at these verses here. They hadn't been really, even to this point, hadn't been really understood really well in times past.

Verse 30—For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. So, it can be physical, can be spiritual. Primarily, it's the spiritual thing. But again, as I mentioned last Sabbath, we have to be very careful in things like this because there was a time when if someone had an anointing and was not healed it was like something is wrong with you; there is some sin. "It's because of your sin." That's what people were told in a lot of cases. "It's because of your sin. There is some sin you haven't repented of."

Well, there are times that God intervenes. I've seen all kinds of things happen in the Church with the same people. There are times that God has intervened and heals quickly when we ask for anointing. There are times where it may be for a little while. I remember one time praying about something and a year later it dawned on me He intervened, and I didn't even know it, didn't think about it because it was gone, you know. What an incredible thing.

Then there are times God doesn't heal. He doesn't have to, and this was so misunderstood in times past. It was like, well, God says He's going to heal, so it has to be then in the Great White Throne or some other time. Well, that's reading things into scripture that aren't there, candidly, and we'll get to those later on in the series.

And so, you have to be very careful how you judge others. Physical. Spiritual. I hope you understand what I'm saying because obviously to say it's because of someone's sin is a little whacky. It's not sound. It's not balanced. But sometimes we may try to judge various things not knowing what God's purpose is in what He does.

We go through all kinds of trials in life and there are times that God intervenes quickly and there are times He lets us go through it. We learn from that. We learn all kinds of things from the variety of ways that God works with us molding and fashioning us.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. So, it seems relatively simple, but it isn't.

James 5:14, back to James. **Is anyone sick**—word for “feeble; weak”—**sickly among you?** So, anything that is a hindrance to one's health, ability, mobility, whatever it might be that is not the norm, keeps you from being able to do your work, whatever it might be. That's kind of a measuring stick, if you will, where we can't work, we can't function like we normally do because we are that weak or sickly or feeble at that point.

These kinds of things happen on a natural basis just because we get older. We get older! Our mobility begins to change. If there is something that's severe it's fine to come before God. If it's something that's very painful or whatever and ask God for intervention, but as I mentioned last Sabbath, once is enough. If we really understand going before God with anointing all we have to ask is really just once. God heard it. That's a matter of confidence, of faith to know that God is with us all the time. He hears us, especially when we obey Him, go to the elders, and get anointed.

...let them call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. So again, because they're in the ministry, name of the Lord. **And the prayer of faith...** Because we believe God, that's what faith is. We believe what God says, especially when it's stated like this - it's a command. We believe the things that God has taught us, the things that He has given to us of understanding of truth, and we strive to live by it. Until we actually live by it, it isn't faith. When we start living by it, what He's given us to believe, then it's faith. It's the exercising of what God has given us to believe that's true. That's what faith is.

And so, when God tells us to have right kind of relationships, do we believe that? When He tells us things we're supposed to do and how to do it, do we believe what He says? Because that reveals whether we're living by true faith. That's why it's *Healing, Believing...True Faith*.

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick. So, automatically because it's in a matter of flow here people have taken this to mean this is strictly about the anointing. In many respects, it has nothing to do with it at all, but you can read something into an area. “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick.” That's why it was taught, “If you're not being healed then you don't have faith. You have sin in your life.” Well, we just hadn't grown to a point where God let us understand that yet. He lets us go through a lot of things and a lot of them are physical until we learn and grow in the matters that are spiritual.

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise them up. So, it sounds like, you know, somebody is sick, and they're going to be raised up.

...and if they have committed sins, they shall be forgiven them. This is about a relationship with God, and if God is with us and God hears us, and we strive to stay close to God and live by faith, put into practice the things that He's given us to believe, then to continue in that relationship this is an automatic. You have to be forgiven of your sins to stay in that relationship, otherwise, we get cut off.

If we stay in sin we're not in that relationship. We're either quenching the spirit because we continue in it and won't repent, or we've come to a point where we're just totally cut off. That's why it says, "and the Lord shall raise them up. And if they have committed sins," should be the obvious, "they shall be forgiven them." Because they're repenting. That's all it's saying. It's showing that they live by faith, they're repenting.

Repenting is a matter of living by faith. If we believe what God says about repentance, about being able to continue in the Body of Christ and being able to have God the Father and Christ dwell in us, this should be so simple and so basic.

So, I'd mentioned before about part of this but then **verse 15**, going on here, **Even the prayer of faith shall save the sick**. So, we talked about this word here and what some of this is and brought out how that this word is a little bit different than the one in verse 14.

So, it'd be good to see how these are used in scripture. Let's turn over to Hebrews 12 just to understand how these are used and what it's really talking about because it's not just a matter of the sickness and why one gets anointed.

Hebrews 12:3—For consider him who endured such contradiction. So again, speaking of Christ and the things he went through to give us what we're able to have. The word "contradiction" here means "being spoken against; hostility towards," and Christ received a lot of that. We in God's Church, because we believe this way of life and live this way of life, we receive some of that in our lives, things that are spoken against us, hostility toward us because of what we believe. Well, he set that example of what we're to live and how we're to live those things.

Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, so that you not become wearied. This word "sick" up here isn't a good translation. It's about being wearied. That's the word that's used in scripture and that's why we're looking at this, how it's really used, and what it means in the Greek.

"The prayer of faith shall save the wearied." We have a physical example. James gave a physical example. God inspired James to give a physical example so we could learn different things from it, that if we won't do the least and the most basic of things that we should be able to understand easily when we're sick and we don't call on the elders of the Church, what

are we doing with the rest of our life in things that God tells us to do? You'd think at a time like that especially, "I want God's help."

The point throughout the book of James is we should always look to God for help. That's our life. We cannot change. That's why we went through John 15 and talked about when Christ made it very clear that he has to dwell in us, God the Father has to dwell in us, that without them we can do nothing. We can't produce any fruit.

So, that's why we have a relationship, want a relationship with God, to cry out to God, to look to God for help every day of our life, in that respect. We need His holy spirit to change self, this mind, to be transformed. So much of the book of James is about that. But for whatever reason in times past, because of just because of being carnal human beings, things in chapter 5:14 through here, and 15, taken totally out of context of what is actually being said spiritually to the Church. It's just looked at as something that has to do with physical healing, and it doesn't.

It just makes a bold flat statement, "When you are sick, you're to call on the elders of the Church." Should be a simple thing because we recognize how God works, He tells us to do it. He also told us how to have a right relationship with Him, how to have a right relationship with others, and what we're supposed to do in order to continue to have His spirit living in our lives. We're to look to God all the time for help.

The point being is, if we won't do it physically, do you really think we're doing it spiritually? Because I've known of people in God's church who don't ask for healing when they should. They can't work. They can't function. They won't do the simplest of a command. So, I already know on a spiritual plane they're not doing it spiritually toward God, looking to God like they should, really believing we need God's spirit every day of our life. If we aren't convicted of that...? That's why the physical example is given in the context of everything else that's said here.

So, it says here again, **For consider him who endured such hostility from others**, if you will, things that were spoken against them, **of sinners against himself, so that you not become wearied and faint**. Because we're going to experience things. We're going to go through hardship. We're going to have people come at us with different things because of what we believe.

The danger in God's Church so often has been, and the longer you're in God's Church this can happen, you can get worn out, wearied in the battle if you're not focused properly, if you don't value enough what God is offering us and understand with all your mind this is a fight until the end. We are in a war. We are in a battle. We are as soldiers, and we're to fight all the time, and fighting isn't an easy thing. It brings a lot of suffering.

And so, if we understand that we're in this way of life and we have to suffer, it's just a part of it. Don't become tired of that. Don't become weary of that. Because so many in God's Church have where they begin to let down, begin to back off, and begin to compromise with others around them because it seems like it might be easier. I've seen that so much, compromise, compromise with the truth because they're getting tired, worn out, wearied.

Well, you don't get worn out if you're looking to God every day for help, if you keep focused, if you're crying out to God for His holy spirit for the help to keep fighting, and if those things ever come on you, you cry out even more; you fast if need be.

That's what James was talking about. If you're rich and you don't need to pray and don't need to look to God then you're rich in your own mind and you're going to become wearied and you're going to start doing something you shouldn't be doing. You're going to look to other means, other things in the world, not to God. It's just automatic. This has repeated itself over and over and over again in God's Church so we're to learn about this in a deeper way now.

...so that you not become wearied and faint. The word means "lose heart; become discouraged," because it happens, and "faint" or **become discouraged in your**, as the word is, **in your life**, in what you're living. What are we living? We're very unique on the earth in six thousand years. We're living something awesomely unique that's only been offered to a few in that whole period of time. Awesome!

Another place, Revelation 2:2 where this word is used. It's not the word "sick." Sometimes things get mistranslated and it's easy to draw the wrong conclusion then by what one thinks the context is all about and miss the whole point of what's being said until God reveals it. God has to reveal it anyway.

Revelation 2:2—I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. Now, this is in the Church, to the Church. It's not just about attitudes toward the world. We've gone through this recently. "You can't bear those who are evil." It's not talking about the outside world, what the world is living. The world can't help it. The world hasn't been called yet. They're living whatever they want to live. We understand that.

But here is to the Church, "you can't bear those who are evil." There comes a time when evil has to be exposed, and it has been over and over and over again in God's Church. It has to be gotten rid of. Whether it's in ourselves or whether it's in the Body somewhere. Well, it's really not even in the Body. It's in the environment of the church. I like to use that word. It's in the environment of the church. It's like it's out in the courtyard, it's in the environment, but it's not in the Church.

Even you have tested/tried those who say they are apostles and are not. See, that's what it's about, evil. When I think of different ones who were taught at Ambassador College what they were, and some of those who were evil, there is one who just fires me up inside. I burn. Read about them here the other day. Somebody sent some things going back in the 60's and articles and Feast site information. Found it really interesting. But some of the names just reach out and the one in particular.

It's hard to take, to realize what some did and what they got by with so long. But God allowed that for a purpose, for the Church to grow and learn and be able to discern. Sometimes it's hindsight discerning, learning it shouldn't have been like that. Sometimes at the time, just like I've mentioned, the one who taught 14/15th Passover, Herbert Armstrong's material was always there. Three verses that prove that Passover is on the 14th. That's all anyone really needs if they're just going to believe and obey God. But for many, it wasn't enough.

Those students, candidly, had that information available to them. They weren't stupid. They were being called by God. They were being worked with by God's spirit, so people have to make choices no matter what the environment is and stand up for what's right. If that had happened a long time ago and some had gone to the ministry above them or whatever or talked to different ones and said, "Do you know what he's teaching, telling us?" maybe it would have been dealt with.

Even you have tested/tried those who say they are apostles and are not and have found them liars. This isn't talking about those who were made apostles. This is talking about what actually happens, the way it's being shown that when someone raises themselves up to a point that they believe something different than what God has given to them and they begin to talk to others about it.

I've seen this throughout the history of my being in the Church, where different ones in a congregation, at some point in their life they've come across some scripture or something they think they see and understand and so they want to start telling others about it and they go off the wall, and then farther off the wall and it just gets worse and worse and worse. But because of what they have done they've raised themselves up to be an apostle. Because apostles are to bring the truth to the Church, but it has to be given by God. But they begin to think that God has given this to them.

...and have borne/carried, and have had patience, and for my name's sake have labored and have not become wearied. That's what the word is. "And haven't become wearied." You just kept at it. You fought for the Church. You fought for what was right. You couldn't stand that which was evil, and you addressed it when it did appear, when it became manifest." That's what it's talking about. "And you didn't weary of that."

Because, candidly, sometimes some things can kind of be a little wearisome, the fact that these things have to happen in the Church so long and so often. But you keep doing what you have to do no matter what anybody thinks, no matter what anybody says. It doesn't matter, you do what is right before God.

So again, **James 5:15—Even the prayer of faith shall save the wearied**, because they're looking to God for help. Because if we're doing what we're supposed to be doing and looking to God for His holy spirit we won't become wearied, we'll be excited about what we've been called to, we're going to be willing and wanting to fight the fight and to stand up for what is right. Even though it's uncomfortable, it doesn't matter, but because it's right we do it. Not out of self-righteousness but because it's right and we ask God for help to do the right.

When you read all these things together in James it means so much more, it truly does. May have to go back through some of these things and look at them to see what it's saying.

So again, **The prayer of faith shall save the wearied**. So again, this is about what can happen because of what it said back in verse 13 where it said, "Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let them pray." That's the context. That's what it's talking about.

That's why the thing about anointing is like it's just thrown in there. And in a sense, it absolutely is, it's just thrown in there. But it's to teach us some things. Not what it's been taken for for a long time and getting healing and anointing all messed up in our minds as to what it's all about.

Verse 15 again here, **Even the prayer of faith shall save the wearied and the Lord shall raise them up**. If we're looking to God, praying to God, it's God that raises us up. That's where our strength comes from, that's where our help comes from. We can't do it on our own. That's what it's saying here.

And if they have committed sins... If that's a part of the problem and a part of the process (which we all have), it's a matter that we are repenting, they are forgiven, and so we're able to have this relationship with God. We're able to pray to God and God answers and He strengthens us, He gives us the help. That's why I love John 15, what we read. He wants to give us His holy spirit. He wants us to produce fruit, "In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." Awesome!

Verse 16—Confess your trespasses to one another... Now, do you think something is wrong there? If you take it for how it's translated it sounds like the Catholic church. They don't do it to one another, but they go in a little booth, and they think that's what you have to do, you know, confess your faults to the priest so you can go out and roll some beads or whatever it is.

“Confess your faults to one another.” So, it’s not a matter of something like confession. We ought to know just by how this is translated that something is missing, something is wrong. I’ve known of people in the Church who have wondered if that’s what they’re supposed to do, and I’ve had to warn them at times, “Don’t go tell all your past to people. It’s not healthy. It’s not good.”

You don’t have to go and tell everything about your past, what you’ve done. That can be harmful. Yes, you’re to repent before God of those things. Then when you’re first coming in, and then they’re forgiven, let it go because it’s gone! The past is the past! Incredible.

The word is about “offenses,” “offenses; trespasses,” oftentimes just translated about “offenses.” Well, so much of James is talking about the tongue. When we have trouble in a relationship because of misusing it or something else has been done then we’re to go make it right. To make something right you have to go tell someone, “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have said that.” That’s what it’s talking about. “I shouldn’t have said that. I didn’t do that right. I didn’t handle that well.” To be open about it. That’s what it’s talking about.

It’s not going and talking about confessing your life to someone. It’s talking about when you’ve done something wrong and you’ve offended someone else, you’ve said something that you shouldn’t have said, and it’s been hurtful and painful to the other person, and you catch yourself. Because of God’s spirit, if we’re close to God, God’s going to help us to see that or it comes out in some other way, that they come and tell you what you’ve done. Then you’re supposed to acknowledge that, own it, and try to make it right then. Confess, acknowledge it. That’s what it’s talking about. Acknowledge it. That’s all it’s about.

...and pray for one another. So, it’s about a desire to be right with one another. So often things are repeated that have happened in times past in the Church. Some of the same ones, some of the same individuals, some of the same conflicts with the same people because they have something they never have worked out, they haven’t acknowledged certain things to one another yet. They haven’t really tried to be a peacemaker. Yet we’re charged with being peacemakers.

But you can’t do it on your own and you can’t even do it the right way without God’s help. Sometimes people can go and try to talk to someone and do it totally wrong. You might as well have just kept your mouth shut and not done it in the first place if you don’t do it right. That’s where you have to ask God for help, to be of a humble spirit, to be of a right mind because you love them. And if you don’t love them, ask God for help to love them, to do it for the right reasons in a humble spirit, willing to acknowledge your fault, your error. That goes a long way in bringing about peace.

There are people who won’t acknowledge their error, won’t acknowledge their fault. You know, even in families sometimes a parent, an adult, won’t acknowledge to their child that

they were wrong about something they said or told them or in the way they said it. You're teaching your children the wrong things if you don't do that, if you don't acknowledge - maybe not immediately if you can't, but you better make it right when you know it's wrong.

...and pray for one another that you may be healed. So, what's that about? Well, it could be about physical and spiritual. The physical is there already and the point being is if we're not right with someone else—what we read earlier—“And if they have committed sins they shall be forgiven them.” And so now it's talking about acknowledging your faults, in essence, “praying for one another, that you may be healed.”

So, if it's tied into physical healing, the point being is it's a matter of whether or not God's hearing. It's not a matter of whether or not God intervened to heal, but it's a matter of whether or not God's there and your petition is there before God and been received by God in anything you pray about.

But healing, as an example here, we can use that physically. So, the point being is you can go to an elder and ask for anointing and ask to be healed of something, but the reality is if you have a dispute going on with someone and you're ignoring your responsibility to make it right and you're not going and correcting something you know should have been corrected in a relationship, you haven't been forgiven yet. Did you go and ask God for forgiveness of mishandling it, and then because of true faith because of what He's given us to believe we are to be peacemakers, we are to make things right, we are to acknowledge the errors we have in our relationships.

If we're not applying some of those things because we believe God, we can be cutting our self off from God because we're living in sin. So much sin is about relationships. It's about how we get along, if we really love one another, if we have something against someone else, if we're misjudging, judging harshly someone else, won't forgive.

So, this gets down to the nitty-gritty of how we're living our lives as far as God's way of life is concerned toward one another. And so, it can also then obviously be about that which is more important. You know, we don't have to be healed of physical things. It's great when we are. But what you do have to be healed of is our mind.

The point is if it can't happen on a physical plane because we're hindering something that we should be able to see, that God won't even intervene for us even if we've gone to the elder and asked for anointing and we know there's a dispute that we're not repenting of and not making right and we're just ignoring our responsibility or brushing over it or not even thinking about it. Sometimes we can get so far removed from it we just do something and have that problem and we don't even think about it. God says we're to be examining ourselves constantly, in that respect, judging ourselves. This is about relationships so often.

So, if we don't do it physically and God doesn't intervene there in the sense of even hearing, let alone perhaps intervening and answering, he won't hear, the point being is what about then on a spiritual plane with what's going on in the mind. We want this mind to be transformed. We want to be healed, and if we're not right with God because we're not doing some of the simplest of things when it comes to relationships within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, then our mind isn't being healed. It's not being changed like it should be. It's not being transformed like it should be.

That's the greater thing of what James is talking about here. All the way through, it's really the major context of everything in the book of James.

"And pray for one another that you may be healed." So, having God's favor, having God's help in our life because of repenting of sin, that's what this is about because we are looking to God on a constant basis.

The effective, fervent prayer... Now, a better translation of those words really describes more what the root of some of these are in the Greek. But it's **The actively working prayer...** is really the most perfect way of translating this. **The actively working prayer**, because we're doing it constantly on a continual basis before God, and what it produces. **The actively working prayer of a righteous one avails much.** It means that it is strong. We receive strength then from that from God. So, because we have a relationship with God and we understand the importance of going before God continually for help, for guidance, for direction.

It says here that kind of prayer, of a righteous one... And what is righteousness? Because we believe God and do what He says, we strive to live by faith, it's attributed to us for righteousness because we're not righteous. But the more we do those things of applying what we believe and we live them, we are becoming more righteous, though we're still going to have sin in our life that we have to repent of. But the point being is we're to be growing spiritually. Beautiful when we understand the process.

So, it says again here, **The actively working prayer of a righteous one avails much.** It's strong, powerful. That's what the words mean.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. Now, this example here of Elijah, it told us earlier, we were told earlier, we read earlier about to consider the prophets and things that they have gone through, the hardships and so forth, and now it actually brings out one, Elijah, and uses him as an example and talks about what he did.

So, I think it would be good to go back and look at the story. It's an inspiring story. Even though we may know it really well, it's good to go back over it. I love it.

Back in 1 Kings 16. Because it goes back to this thing of hardness or hardships of things we suffer because this way of life wasn't meant to be easy; it is meant to be hard. And because we live something so opposite of what the world does and what we believe and what we see and what we strive to live by, the world doesn't receive it very well, obviously. It can come at you in different ways whether it be family or on the job or whatever it might be.

So, this matter of suffering hardship, that's why it says to look at them as an example. And so, we need to consider some of the hardships of what Elijah went through, and the next time we're feeling bad because of what we're going through just go back and read about what Elijah went through or what some others went through, what Daniel went through. It doesn't matter who you look at, Jeremiah, Isaiah, some of the things these people suffered because of believing God and living what they lived at that time.

All the apostles, you look at what they went through. Only one who died of natural causes toward the end, John. All the rest went through horrible things. We don't have it that bad, that difficult. We go through difficult things. We live in a totally different age today though. We're blessed today in that.

1 Kings 16:29—In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. So, this is in the northern tribe. Broken up long before. Judah is to the south. Up in Samaria is where the ten tribes are scattered.

Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Eternal, more than all who were before him. That's saying a lot because they did some horribly evil things up to this point in time. But Ahab put a new definition into evil.

Then it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. So, the kings before this, it mentions every one of them in the North, it talks about they followed the same way, "In the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat." Mentions it over and over again.

Now it adds more because it says wasn't that bad enough? Because what Jeroboam did from the very beginning, he didn't want people to go back down to Judah on the High Days or around Passover, so he changed to holidays that were more akin to pagan religion and built-up places that they could go to in the north. Matter of fact, I think in the beginning they had three different areas that people could go to to make it easier, so they didn't have to travel so far, and then used God's name.

Sounds familiar today, doesn't it? Still using God's name, talking about stories that are there, and mixing it together. They were doing that clear back here.

So, he changed the Sabbath to Sunday, changed the Holy Days to holidays, in essence. They didn't call it holidays but that's what they did, basically, different periods of time. Offset them because he was afraid, as it records it in scripture, that if they went back down to Judah, they might be moved to want to have the kingdom back again, and then that king rather than the one they have. He didn't want that; he wanted to stay king.

Then it came to pass as though it had been a trivial thing... that he took as wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. So, the others didn't do this up to this point. That's why this is worse. So, it was bad enough, it says in essence, it wasn't a trivial thing, but as though it were he went farther. It wasn't anything to do with God then. It was just a matter of Baal and serving him and going through those things because of his wife, Jezebel. She had quite a bit of influence, pretty bad influence, obviously, as you read the story about her, and sway over Ahab.

Verse 32—Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Now, this is the word "Asherah." So, it was a part of that religion, some of the same type of thing as Astarte and Ishtar, but here is the Phoenician goddess, in essence, Asherah, the Canaanite, in this case here as it says, "a Canaanite goddess." But the same goddess in different areas there.

Ahab did more to provoke the Eternal God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. Because he went further in what he did in bringing that stuff in to make the people go even farther away from anything they had known before.

In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub, he set up its gates, according to the word of the Eternal, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun. So, again here, things that they copied but using it all for the wrong purposes here.

So, before jumping into chapter 17 here, going on down to chapter 17, it'd be good to be reminded of what we covered again in James 5 that needs to be included in this context of Elijah, that his life was arduous in the sense when you start understanding what happened to Elijah, he lived some pretty tough things. All the people did who were striving to live God's way of life in that particular region of the world at that time.

So, anyone that did, their life didn't amount to a whole lot as far as Ahab, and especially Jezebel. She was out to destroy them, to kill them. Life wasn't easy for him, and it comes out in the story as we continue on it. So, when you talk about, in that respect, suffering hardship, sometimes we think we're suffering something that's hard, and life can be hard, but there are people who suffered things that's hard for us to grasp and comprehend, it really is, what they went through.

That's why it told us in James 5:10 as I mentioned earlier where it says, "My brethren, take the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering, affliction, and patience." That's why because they received the brunt of these things in their time period, over and over again.

1 Kings 17:1—Then Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, As the Eternal God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word. Pretty strong. Then he was tested in some of this. It wasn't easy.

The word of the Eternal came to him, saying, Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. So, how God did these things at different times, I think it's very much the same as it has been through much of history. It's a matter of what God just communicates to the mind, and after it's happened for a time he knew. It wasn't a matter of words have to be spoken, or all of a sudden, they hear words, something coming into them, but it is in the mind. And so, he went there.

And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there. Hmm. Now, you can read something like that, and I think, birds? Birds are going to take care of you. Candidly, I wouldn't be real keen having to be by a brook of water that's running. Have water and here comes some birds and I'm waiting for them to come in to bring my food because it's been in their mouth. Maybe it's just me. And maybe it's where do they get this? I don't even want to think about it.

So he went and did according to the word of the Eternal. So, sometimes we look at these things and we don't realize these weren't easy things to do. It just wasn't easy. There are other things he could have done. He could have gone someplace else where there was more of an abundance of food, but he didn't do it. He went where he believed that God had told him to do and did what God said, wait, wait there.

When I read through this I think of Johnny when he talks about how Moses had reached down and grabbed the snake. Now, if you have feelings like I do, and I think Johnny does, about snakes, especially when it's what it probably was. Looked like a very poisonous snake in the first place. If it's a regular snake, little garter snake, no big deal, go ahead and grab it and toss it away. But if it's poisonous, I'm on the move or I'm grabbing a weapon really quick like.

So, we can read through things, like, we're able to laugh a little bit at something like that. But sometimes there are just things that were hard. I think of Moses having to go back to Pharaoh each time knowing he could lose his life because of what he was like. We don't think of things like that oftentimes, of what some of them had to go through to obey what God told them to do. But they did it and they believed that God would take care of them.

That's the only way you can do those things. That's what we have to live in the future here. To believe in God in a manner, in a level, in a way that we are so convicted He's there, He's there for us, He's there to help us. Doesn't mean it's not going to be hard. Doesn't mean that some won't die, but to have faith in that.

So he went and did according to the word of the Eternal. For he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning... So, at least there is bread there, incredible, and meat. Just my carnal human nature, I'd wonder where that came from. But anyway. ...the bread and the meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook. So, I'm sure each day it became a little easier.

Then it happened after a while that the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. So, his words of what he had to say and what he told Ahab, "It's not going to rain again; it's not going to be dew on the earth until it comes from my mouth, the words that I speak in essence, that it comes back." Pretty strong. Pretty bold. How did he have that kind of thinking, that kind of mind? He believed God. He believed what he was given.

Then the word of the Eternal came to him, saying, Arise and go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Then, it says, **See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.** So, "Now you're going to go to this area. There's a widow there and she's going to take care of you."

1 Kings 18, dropping on down. We could go through some of the story there of what took place, and if you know the story of the widow and what had happened, her son died, and then Elijah prayed to God and after covering him a few times, praying to God each time, asking God to raise him from the dead, and He brought him from the dead. Incredible.

He was dead. Elijah was praying to God earnestly because he was crying out to God, striving to reason with God, "I am here and why should this evil come upon her while I'm here serving You? And should evil come upon her because I'm here?" So, he tried to reason with God about various things in that manner because it was hard to go through this and to realize what had taken place, and when you're with someone for a period of time like that you're going to draw closer to them, your feelings toward them. Here they are sacrificing, in essence, taking their life, putting their life at risk, because if you know the whole story Jezebel was out to kill all of them, all who were called prophets that might be in Samaria. Not only that but Ahab had sent to different nations around and had asked, "Is Elijah there?" They wanted to kill him.

So, he knew these things. He knew that they were out to get him, and because as this went on here it happened more and more, and they even made these nations testify, witness, or give an oath that no, he's not here, because the point being was if they had lied and he found out later it meant he was going to come after them.

So, when you have that kind of pressure? We read through stories, and we don't think about, "What would it be like to go through that?" Hardship? Slightly.

And even in that, God provided for the widow for so long there. There was always the flour, the food that was there. God supplied it. God gave him encouragement, but we're going to go through the story and it's quite incredible what happens. Let's go on.

1 Kings 18:1—Then it came to pass after many days that the word of the Eternal came to Elijah, in the third year, saying... So, here we are, we're into the third year now. At some point concerning the famine, if you will, or no rain, the drought that was there, **Go, show yourself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.** So, he knew that this had to take place, that he had to go confront or place himself before and say certain things to Ahab who he already knew was out to do him in because of his wife, if his wife was there.

And so, Elijah went to present himself to Ahab as the famine had become severe in Samaria. And Ahab had called Obadiah, who was in charge of his house. Now, Obadiah, it goes on to say here, **Now Obadiah feared the Eternal greatly.** It tells how much he did as we go along here, but he was the one that Ahab relied upon to take care of his house, if you will, and livestock and everything else, to be a supervisor over it all. Kind of like Joseph was in Egypt when he worked there.

For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the Eternal, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water. So, it shows the kind of man he was that he took that risk upon himself because he wanted to do what was right before God, wanted to serve God, in that respect, honor God in any way he knew how. That's what it means to fear God. In this particular case here took a hundred prophets. Put fifty in one cave and fifty in another and constantly provided food for them because that was kind of tricky. He had access to it. He had access to a lot of food because of his position. But he feared and wanted to honor and obey God more than he did Ahab. Let's put it that way, okay?

Verse 5 again—Now, Ahab had said to Obadiah, here we go, Go into the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks. So, they were going to go out to all the springs and brooks that they could find throughout all Samaria. That's quite a task in itself.

...perhaps we might find grass to keep the horses and mules alive so that we will not have to kill any livestock. So they divided the land between them to explore it. So it says here, **Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.** That's quite a division of Samaria, if you will, to go out and try to find places where maybe there is some spring or whatever and enough grass to feed some of the animals.

Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he recognized him, and fell on his face, and said, Is that you, my lord Elijah? And he answered him, It is I. Go, tell your master that Elijah is here. Now, Obadiah wasn't real keen on this because, again, we can read stories, but it's hard to put ourselves in their place. So, here's another individual. You put yourself in their place; what was that like?

Verse 9—Then he replied, How have I sinned, that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me? That's what he felt. "What have I done? What have I sinned," in essence, "so greatly that you're sending me to Ahab so he can kill me?"

As the Eternal your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you; and when they said, He is not here, he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you. So, the whole point of that is if they were lying and found out later on, he would come back later to destroy them, in essence. That's what it was. That's why they had to take that oath.

And now you say, Go, tell your master, Elijah is here! Then it will come to pass, as soon as I am gone from you, that the spirit of the Eternal will carry you unto a place I do not know. It's like, "It's going to happen. As soon as I leave here God's going to lead you to some other place and then when I come back and you're not here he's definitely going to kill me."

We can read through things like this, and it just doesn't seem real. But this was real to them, fearful, going to die.

So, when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant have feared the Eternal from my youth. Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Eternal? So, he knew that she was the one, and Ahab, wimpy as he was, gave into her in different things, but she was the force behind it all. And so, he said, "Didn't you hear? Haven't you heard, Elijah?" In other words, he's looking for some reason, he's trying to find something to say, "Don't you know what I've done? But you're sending me out," in his mind, "You're sending me to my death."

...how I hid one hundred men of the Eternal's prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water? So now you say, Go, tell your master, Elijah is here. He will kill me! It was just pretty set in his mind.

Then Elijah said, As the Eternal of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to him today. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab, it says, went to meet Elijah. So, he did his job, went, and told him, and Ahab went to meet up with him, knowing full well what he had said, too, "You're not going to have any rain until it comes from my lips," in essence, "until I say." You talk about a period of three and a half years now coming and going and the suffering that's going on and now they're going out trying to save

some of their own livestock just in that the king has. Not talking about the nation and what they're suffering and you're governing a people that have no food.

You know, there are a lot of countries have gone to war when there is no food. People will rebel, and they'll do all kinds of things when that happens. So he was, Ahab was kind of on a tightrope. Jezebel and the people, he really was.

Verse 17—Then it happened when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, Is that you, O troubler of Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Eternal and have followed Baal. He didn't mince any words. Told him exactly what he was doing, what he had done. Not easy to do, but he did it.

Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table. So again, to understand all this is not that easy. It's a story, a condensed story at that.

But Ahab, whether it was a matter of desiring, maybe believing to a part here that they're living in drought and "If there is any means at all to end this, I'm willing to end it," I don't know, but he followed through and did it. He brought them all together there, and basically, what's going to take place, well, Elijah very well might lose his life. If he doesn't come through in all this Ahab is going to take care of it.

So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel. Now, there is no way that all of Israel came in here, so it's an expression. Perhaps the leaders, the different leaders of the different regions, the representatives of the different areas. Because that's how they always govern, if you will, and so different ones would come together, and this is an occasion like that, plus all the priests that were there. So, you're talking about, what, eight hundred and fifty priests altogether.

So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel and gathered prophets together on Mount Carmel. Then Elijah came to all the people, and said, How long will you falter between two opinions? So, he spoke to the crowd that was there, that had gathered there, "How long are you going to keep going back and forth between two opinions, of what's right and what's wrong, of who to serve and who not to serve?" Because that's been Israel's history, in one respect, but obviously, they've gone a lot farther now because now it was a matter of worshipping Baal.

If the Eternal is God, follow Him. This reminds me of the time of the Apostasy. That's basically what it came down to. I told people that's what it came down to, "If this is right, what God has given us through the past, then this is what you stand for. If what Joe Tkach says is true, you have to make that choice yourself." This is what it came to here. He's telling

him, who is God. Though different in the outcome of things that happened but same sort of thing where it just comes down to this, "You've got to decide."

So he said, If the Eternal is God, follow Him, but if Baal, follow him. You're going to have to make a choice. You're going to have to decide.

But the people didn't answer him a word. Then Elijah said to the people, I alone remain a prophet of the Eternal. Now, he says that again later, so I don't know fully what this means when it talks about Obadiah had hidden the fifty in two caves. I don't know if it's a matter of being a different kind of prophet that's being spoken of here in the sense of what Elijah was fulfilling and what they might have been, or whether they had been killed. Don't know. Almost sounds like they have all been killed, so I don't know. We don't know. I can't find any place that it states specifically what might have happened.

He says, I alone remain a prophet of the Eternal, but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but do not put fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Eternal.

Now this is awesome here because you have to realize, again, this isn't just something he's doing. He's been given it to do. This is what he's following up on, what God gave him to do. He had confidence. He knew this was from God.

The God who answers by fire is God. So all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. "It's good. Then we can say." Because they wouldn't say anything before. It's like, "What am I going to say, put on the spot here?" Okay.

Now, Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it. So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us! But there was no sound. It says, "no voice," but there was no sound, no response is what it is. No one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

Then at noon, Elijah mocked them and said, Cry louder, for he is a god that is either meditating, or is busy, or on a journey, or perhaps sleeping and must be awakened. I think there is one place where some of these words refer to it in a different way, where he's off relieving himself basically is what it's about.

...and must be awakened. So they cried louder. Can you imagine just mocking them as he was and them then wanting to go farther in what they were doing so **they cried louder and they cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances until the blood gushed**

out of them. Isn't that crazy that the minds of people and some of the kinds of things they did, thinking that this is what their god wants?

Then when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no sound; no one answered, no one paid attention. Then Elijah said to all the people, Come near to me. So all the people came near to him. He repaired the altar of the Eternal that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones... This wasn't a very large area, but again, this is something he did then. He took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Eternal had come, saying, Israel shall be your name. So, this is, again, going back in prophecy and saying this is who you were, and again, the representation of the twelve tribes, Israel.

Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Eternal; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold twelve liters of seed.

Then verse 33—So, he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood. Then he said, Do it a second time, and they did it a second time. And he said, Do it a third time, and they did it a third time so that the water ran all around the altar, and he also filled the trench 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, Eternal God... This is amazing to think something like this took place and here are all these different ones that had been brought in, representing Israel, if you will, to the north there, of Samaria, and the eight hundred and fifty priests that were gathered there, four hundred of one and four hundred and fifty of another.

Eternal God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel, So, he's crying out to God, "Let them see that You are God" and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. So again here, he did these because it was a matter that God had given this to him to do.

Verse 37—Hear me, O Eternal, hear me, that these people may know that You are the Eternal God and that You have turned their hearts back to You again. So, it's not that they're going to come to some grand repentance, but to go from serving Baal, to go back to what they knew, which was very little in the sense of some of the things of their past and using God's name in the stories of old. So, they had the choice of those, to come back to that, at least then that God would be spoken of and the stories of the Old Testament and that type of thing, even though it was mixed up with other things and done improperly (hope that makes sense) and not mixed with the stuff of Baal as what happened later here. So, it was a matter of a clear distinction of those two ways, of what was before and what was after in Israel, although it was all wrong.

So, he's telling them that "they have turned their hearts back to You again," in other words, at least away from Baal. That's what this is about. It's not that Israel is going to all of a sudden have this great transformation and live as Judah is living. Not going to happen.

Then the fire of the Eternal fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. It had to be quite a sight; all the people who were gathered there that saw that. Very moving. So, a very carnal people, obviously, seeing something that they had never witnessed before. It's not so hard on a physical plane to say, "The Eternal is God!"

When you see something like that, and you see all these other priests out there and they're doing all these crazy dances and jumping around and cutting themselves and nothing is happening, and they didn't even have water. Then they see Elijah over here with all that water and everything else and thinking he's nuttier than a fruitcake, and then all of a sudden, zapped up, every bit of it. Incredible.

Verse 39—Now, when all the people saw it they fell on their faces. Put some fear in them. So, you talk about being turned away from Baal, yes, because they were afraid. "If his God does that, if the one that Elijah is crying out to does that, where do we stand?" So, it's not hard to agree in a moment like that.

And they said, The Eternal, He is God! The Eternal, He is God! So, there was that movement and that feeling that was genuine on a carnal scale because it's a matter of your life.

Then Elijah said to them, Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape! So they seized them, and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there. Then Elijah said to Ahab, Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

Now, there wasn't. There wasn't a cloud in the sky as you're going to find out here in a moment, but he's telling them this is what's coming, "There is the sound of the abundance of rain, so get back while you can before it starts raining."

So, Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servants, Go up now, look toward the sea. So, all these times he's praying. And so, he sends his servant to go look up toward the sea.

So he went up and looked, and said, There is nothing. And seven times he said, Go again. So, we can learn from these things. We can read this and think that he was totally at peace in all this, and this was not a difficult thing. It was because now it's been dry for three and a half years. There hasn't been a bit of rain, and now the further test, the greatest, in that

respect. Even though they've seen everything that they did with what they just experienced with the altar and the sacrifice and everything being taken up, the fire that took it, licked up everything that was on the ground including the trench itself, and yet this wasn't an easy thing either.

Sometimes we don't think that way and don't realize what he's going through and he keeps at it, persistent. He's going to keep doing it because he believes what God said and he's going to continue to pray to God and ask. Because that's what James is talking about. He prayed. He was a righteous man, strived to live by God's way of life, was called by God, worked with by God, and prayer was very much a part of this relationship with God. So, he was looking to God all the way through the story when you see the times especially he prayed and what he spoke of.

So, every time he sent the other, and finally, the seventh time. That had meaning to him, it gave him encouragement, even that, the seventh time of all times, now, and look what he says, **Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand...** In other words, you can see out there toward the sea. It's really small, **but it's rising out of the sea!** So, they hadn't been seeing anything like this. Now there is a cloud and that gives him encouragement again.

So, each step of the way here he's strengthened by it, he's lifted up by it because He believes God and he's doing what he believes that God has given him to do. But you know what? What we miss out on so often is that doesn't mean it's easy. You're tested.

There are things we go through in obedience to God that don't happen right away. There are things that sometimes take time. But the point being is you keep at it. You don't become weary. He could have become weary and given up the fourth time, or the fifth time, or the third time: "Nothing is happening." Yet this was the time he knew it was supposed to happen if it was going to happen. But he was persistent, and he kept praying each time. So, that's the example we're supposed to receive from something like this. Hardship? Absolutely. It's in the mind; it's in the mind. But you keep doing what you're supposed to be doing until it's God's time. God will take care of it, but you have to keep living faith, what God has given you to believe. That's what the whole story is about.

"There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" Some of us would look at something like that and think, still a long way to go. But this was all he needed, a seventh time, a hand, a cloud for once, finally.

So he said, Go up, say to Ahab, Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you. So again here, this is the point then at this point here, not just the eating but now get back.

Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. Then the hand of the Eternal came upon Elijah, and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Now, we go through an entire story like this and then chapter 19 because we go through a lot of things. It's not easy. Even when God answers, even when God does things at different times in our life to strengthen us, there is still other things that follow. It's a constant, continuous thing in our life. You don't just do it once or twice or a few times or at the bigger times of your life, in the sense of more important. You do it all the time.

1 Kings 19:1—And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. Now, she had power. She had a lot of sway. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow at this time.

So, a threat of Jezebel was far worse than something coming from Ahab as far as Elijah was concerned. She'd gone out to kill all the prophets. Elijah hadn't been killed yet and so she's sending him personal word and he got it.

Then when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life. Now, sometimes we look at things like this and think, "Well, didn't he have faith? Didn't he have trust in God, that God's going to take care of him?" Well, yes, but we have moments of weakness too, and especially when it comes to something like that and you have the ability to do something, it's not wrong to save your life. It's good.

So, he's doing what he can do without waiting for God to tell him to do it. God didn't tell him to run for his life but that was a normal reaction because of the trial he's going through. And so again, it's this matter of suffering hardship. Here, after all that had happened, Jezebel is after him to kill him. That's what this is about.

...and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. So, he went way down into Judah. Not just across the border, he went farther down into Judah. He's going for safety. He's running for his life for sure.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. So, that wasn't even enough. He went into the wilderness. There is nobody there. **...and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die.** Now, it's hard for us to think about something like that and think about why would you do that? After everything that happened? Well, because we don't grasp what he was going through. We really can't. We don't.

And he prayed that he might die, and said, It is enough! Now, Eternal, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!

So, it's quite an incredible story that after everything that happened and what he witnessed there with the altar and everything that he had done, and all the priests being killed that were killed, and you would feel that this would be such an incredible victory that you would really be strong.

But the reality is we can go from one thing sometimes to another and be tried again, right behind something that has worked out really great in our lives, and all of a sudden, something else pops up that's hard and maybe even harder than before.

Because being out there, being taken care of by the raven, though it was hard as far as the thinking is concerned, all that time that was there, and then that time with the widow and then the suffering that went through with the son that died, her son that died, and saw the things he even saw there, and then finally, this great event that took place before Ahab and all the prophets and all the people that were gathered there, it doesn't mean that we're not physical, that we don't have trials that we go through, that we have hardships that pop up, that one can follow another.

But you don't become weary, and you don't faint. You don't quit. That's the easy way out as far as carnality is concerned. But to fight for this way of life, to fight to do what is right, that's something else. That's another story because we're going to stop there.

But again, just to try to put yourself there and think about what it had to be like for him to come to that point where he felt that "I've done enough." The whole story behind that is, after everything that's been done you would think (in his mind, in his thinking, as anyone would) that surely Ahab and everyone else now is going to uphold the Eternal God. Nope. That didn't happen, and that was the problem.

So, you can do certain things, and everything all of a sudden seems to turn against you, everything you worked for. So, all that seemed to him, in that respect, that it didn't produce anything.

You know, well, I think of some of the things we go through and do, and we come down to the point where one of the greatest things that God has brought us to is to realize nobody cares, nobody listens, as a whole. They just don't. Until it's God's time to specifically begin to draw certain ones. Then when He does, you know it.

It's the same as adding to the Church. You don't have to get worried about any of those kinds of things, whenever God does or doesn't do that, because that's God's job. God is the one who calls. When different ones who are moved and motivated in the scattered Body out there, in God's time, whatever that is, we wait for and wait to see how those things are going to transpire. But all those things are in God's hand, and we just strive to live by faith, believing God.

We're going to continue on in the series next Sabbath.