

Our Oath to God, Pt. 2

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Last week, we began a new series entitled, *Our Oath to God*. Today is *Part 2* of that series.

We began this series by focusing on the last area of verses that were covered in the previous sermon series, which was entitled *Persevere to the End*. And it's amazing to me sometimes how things come to us or come along, how God reveals various things to us, and don't even know that that's what's taking place until you are there. And that is what has happened in this particular case.

Anyway, those verses were in Hebrews 10, and the subject being covered by those verses has everything to do with this new series. So again, that last series ended in chapter 10 as a whole, and this series is based on what is stated there in chapter 10.

So, let's go back and read some of that again because this is a building process. A lot of this is new in the sense of understanding things in the Old Testament more on a spiritual plane that God is showing us that we haven't comprehended in times past, as we tend to read stories, obviously, more so in the Old Testament, on a physical plane. And yet there is so much there. It's incredible how much was planned, prepared, and given those things that are physical as a type of something that would be fulfilled and accomplished later on that God had already planned. So, awesome to me.

Hebrews 10:29—Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot. We are only in the last, have only in the last few years really begun to understand this in a deeper way than ever before, and it's being stressed more because we're going to go into an age where this is going to become even more critical for people in their lives, of the seriousness of what God is doing in the world, and a new government that's going to be established. But even now, for the Church to understand our history, to understand some things that have happened, the choices people have made that are far more serious than what they could have ever grasped at that time.

And it's healthy for us then at this end-time to grasp just how serious our choices are, especially in oath that we make before God Almighty. It's not a small thing before God, and that's stated over and over again in scripture. That's why it's asking... And we're going to look at an example today of where this, part of this, came from, and how this was established even here.

"Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot?" Turned against God, turned against Christ, has gone against, basically, understanding of what was given about why they're being baptized, what the importance of Joshua's death was all about. How anyone can forget that (but it still happens), in the sense of not taking it seriously, is profound.

...and counted the blood of the covenant, the reason he died, **by which they were sanctified**. Because there is no other way to be sanctified, to be set apart for holy use and purpose, because we have to have our sins forgiven us in order to have a relationship with God, in order to receive that which gives us the ability to serve God, the ability to have fellowship with God, the ability to receive of spiritual things from God.

...by which they were sanctified, a common thing, and insulted, or has done insult to the spirit of grace? So, understanding what grace is all about, everything that comes to us because of what Christ went through.

For we know Him who said, Vengeance is Mine. In other words, God will execute His judgments on those who fail to repent. That's what this is about. It's not a matter of being vengeful; it's a matter of something that has to be done in the sense of judgment. It's law. We break the law, certain things have been given to us, the greatest of wealth ever, and things that are precious and mighty, and if we don't want that or we turn our back on that, then there is a price to pay. That's just the bottom line. So, this is what these things are all about.

I will repay, says the Eternal. In other words there is a payment to be made for disobedience. There is that which we receive in type of payment on a physical plane for doing what is right. There is that which is in front of us that God desires that we be able to achieve and have, and that will be given to those who persevere to the end, those who have part in God's Family. But those who don't, there is a payment they have to pay, and that is for their own sins because they have turned their back on Christ.

I will repay, says the Eternal. Then again, The Eternal will judge His people. It's absolute. **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.** In other words, to fall under His judgment for failure to repent. So, that's something that people should fear, what will happen, what's going to take place. That's absolute as far as God's concerned.

Let's turn over to Deuteronomy 6. So, last Sabbath, after covering these particular verses in Hebrews, we went on to Deuteronomy 6, which again, has so much to do with the foundation of what is in Hebrews 10 that's been built upon or being built upon, if you will. Deuteronomy 6:1, and then we'll be caught up here with the ending of last Sabbath's sermon.

Deuteronomy 6:1—Now this is the commandment, the statutes and judgments which the Eternal your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe in the land which you are crossing over to possess. So again, a very physical thing as far as the Israelites were concerned because they couldn't grasp this. And theirs was only going to be a physical relationship with God. Whereas the rest of the world, the rest of the nations, weren't able to have this. But they were going to receive a favor as a physical nation, and the more they yielded to and sought to do what was right, the more God would bless them on a physical plane. It wasn't spiritual at all except for the few that God called out of the

different periods of time there with whom He was working, just as He works with us. But God worked with them personally in those times.

And so again here, an awesome thing to understand what was being given. And it was told to them about the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, the things that God had instructed and guided them in. And then later on in the Church God began to reveal the spirit of these things, what it's all about, what His law is all about, how judgment is established and where it comes from as far as the mind of God and the purpose behind it.

And so, it's good that we begin to learn how to judge matters in the way that God has revealed on a spiritual plane. That's an awesome process to go through.

And it says here, though, **that you may observe in the land which you are crossing over**. I love that word because it means that you're passing through or that you're going to go through. So, and then to possess. On a spiritual plane, we go through something unique in that because we go through a land, if you will, and it's all around us. It's spiritual Egypt. But we've been called out of spiritual Egypt, and we have the opportunity to change, to have our minds changed, to be transformed.

And yet that world is all around us. It's the way it's been for six thousand years. And we're passing through it. We make choices along the way, and desirous of the possession of what is ahead. We understand what that's about. We understand we go through a process once impregnated with God's holy spirit, and our desire is to receive the possession of what God says we can have, an inheritance, spiritual in nature in the sense of composition in life, to live everlasting life, and then the inheritance along with Christ, the entirety of the universe, things we can't even begin to comprehend.

So again here, this was on a physical plane, said to them. For us, we need to see it on a spiritual one, because this is really what it's all about. That was only a type to begin teaching something, that once God began to work with people on a spiritual plane, we could understand what these things were all about, that were a type of something to be fulfilled far greater later on.

Then, in verse 5, it comes to the heart of whether a person truly embraces and determines to hold on to what God has commanded in His way of life anyway. **Verse 5 says, You shall love the Eternal, your God, with all your heart.** That should be something that is deep inside of us, a desire to love God, a desire to draw closer to God, a desire to please God, a desire to honor God in how we live our lives. And we have to pray about those things. It's a spiritual matter. It's a matter of wanting to draw closer to God, asking God for help to change in order to think this way on a continuing basis.

"You shall love the Eternal, your God, with all your heart." What is that saying, basically? God has to be first. God has to be first above everything else. That's why it says in Luke 14, when Christ gave the guidance and direction there, that we have to love less anything else. Doesn't matter, things or people, we have to love them less than God. God has to be first, or our minds aren't really right. They aren't

really right with God if God isn't first. Because everything that has to do with how to live with others, how to think right toward others, is determined by our ability to do that properly. God is first. And that should be from the heart. That's how we love God with all of our heart.

...with all your life. We told God at baptism, basically, whether we grasped it or not, that's what we made before God. "My life is Yours." Awesome!

...and with all your strength. So, a lot here about putting God first. Our strength. And our strength can't be just our own. We come to learn that we depend upon, we rely upon the strength of God, God's holy spirit to be in us, and we have to cry out for that, we have to pray to God to help us day by day to be able to receive of His spirit, which has a lot to do then with asking for forgiveness of sin so that He will, and His Son will, dwell in us and we be able to dwell in them.

Verse 8—You shall bind them as a sign on your hand. So, this can be taken as a physical thing, but for us it's spiritual. We understand what it means by how we work, by what we do, by everything that we do, it should be geared toward God. We're here for a time, and He's blessed us to have jobs, the ability to work, the ability to have many things, especially in this age at this time in human life. Incredible, the richness of life physically, even, and sometimes it isn't enough for people. We're so blessed. We have so much.

"You shall bind them as a sign in your hand." In other words, a reminder everything has come from God. Everything we're able to do in life, that ability comes from God. And then, when God asks for a very small portion back, that shouldn't be a problem.

...and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. Has to do with what we're really focused upon, that we're sharply, keenly focused on God

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. So, this is something the Israelites did. They tacked things on the side there, something that looks like the roll of the ten commandments or whatever. And what does that do? Not a whole lot, spiritually. It's just a physical routine of physical worship. That's all it is. For us, it should be spiritual; has to do with the mind, what we do, how we do it, all the time.

Now, let's continue on from where we were last Sabbath. **Verse 10—So it shall be, when the Eternal your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers...** Now, there's a type here, but for us, there's a process that we have to grasp and comprehend, which is a matter of something we know we don't receive immediately. There is that we have to dwell in, temporary dwellings for a time, that is symbolic in many respects of the Israelites being in the wilderness in temporary dwellings, and those examples we've had at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Because that's what God wants us to remember – this is a temporary dwelling in which God's spirit can work until the mind has been transformed, so that we can be born into His Family. But the process

begins at baptism. That's when we're able to become the children of God. The Israelites were never referred to as His children in that regard. We become children, in that regard, once we're baptized. Theirs is only a physical relationship. They were a special nation unto God and so forth, but not that spiritual relationship that He offers people once you receive the impregnation of His holy spirit. That's a unique thing, to have that in our minds, in our being.

So, it shall be when the Eternal your God, brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build. Now, this doesn't happen immediately for us spiritually. We grasp and understand that God's spirit is able to dwell in us, that we're able to have a relationship with God, and what was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not just about something in the sense of being in God's Family, we understand there's a process that we have to go through in order to get there.

There is a process we have to go through. We have to travel through Egypt, if you will, spiritual Egypt in this world around us, and fight the battles that are there in order for this mind to be changed, to be transformed in the way we think.

And constant choices we have to make. Only then are we able to go through in time to where God says, "Now, I know you," on a spiritual plane, and we can be born into His Family—awesome—and receive the promises; this that He did give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But those promises began with Christ. Some of the greatest promises He made had to do with the seed and the power that would be there through the forgiveness of sin through Joshua the Christ.

So, that's where it begins, the process begins in our life within the Church, within the Body of Christ. And our journey is there that determines whether or not we're going to be in God's Family. So, that's where our journey is. It's awesome to grasp, to comprehend and grasp this process. And it's a very precious one, a mighty thing that God has given us, the ability to be able to receive by choice.

...which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham... So, again, this is not just about Elohim; it's about everything that leads up to being able to be Elohim. Because once we're there, it's accomplished, it's finished. Now, the plan of God isn't finished, but the process of what we have to grow through in order to become a part of the God Family it's accomplished at the end.

So again **...that land which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities.** We already have that in embryo. Mount Zion, Jerusalem. The Church is the beginning of it, but it's not there yet. But it's all there as far as God is concerned. He's provided for the Body of Christ, the Church of God. He's provided for that which we can dwell in on a spiritual plane, Jerusalem, if you will, the beginning of Jerusalem in embryo, yes, but the beginning of that. And we have to live those things that is a part of that process of what's able to be produced by our spiritual birth, our begettal, if you will.

...which you did not build. God just offered it to us, to be in the Church of God through baptism, through the laying on of hands, the opportunity to have fellowship on a continuing basis with God Almighty. That's awesome! And that is the process of Jerusalem being built and created, of Mount Zion. These are the things that are being spoken of. They're in us. We're able to live them. We're a part of the building. It's a beautiful thing when we grasp it.

"Which you did not build." God builds it. God creates it; it's a creation from God. And He lets us be a part of it. And as long as we continue to be faithful and persevere, we'll be part of that in a far greater way forever in time. Awesome!

Verse 11—houses or dwelling places, if you will, **full of good things.** What are those on a spiritual plane? Our lives, each one of us, which "In My Father's house are many dwelling places." God has prepared a means by which God will dwell in us, that Joshua will dwell in us, the holy spirit can dwell in us. This is awesome. And that's what this is about.

"Houses full of good things." What is that? Well, everything that's good comes from God, and so, He's helping us to get rid of the things that aren't good in the house, of the things that need to be gotten rid of, and filling it with things that are of God. Beautiful.

...full of good things which you did not fill. Now, we have to do our part. We have to struggle, and we have to fight for it. But it's by the power of God. That's why we can't make these changes on our own. We can't obey God on our own. We have to have God's constant help, His dwelling in us. It's so simple, so basic, in that regard, so paramount in the process.

...vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant. That comes from God! The ability to be part of the vineyard, the vine, to be a part on it, our desire to be a part on it, to be able to produce fruit that we can't produce on our own, but it requires God's spirit. We don't do it on our own. It requires God every step of the way. And that's what these things are about. These aren't about just physical things at all, they're about spiritual things that God had planned and purposed and gives a road map, if you will, diagrams, blueprints of how it's all accomplished. It's an awesome thing.

So again, ability for fruit to grow and God's spirit to increase in our lives as we grow.

...which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full—then beware. This has happened in the Church. It happened. Laodicea screams out loud about this one, of what can happen. And it's a warning of what can happen with human beings when filled with things that come from God and begin to take it to ourselves, thinking we're rich and increased with goods, lifted up by the truth, by whatever it is that God has given to us. And so much so that we begin to then branch out into other things that we think we can see and understand things that are of God, that haven't been given to us by God, that didn't come from Herbert Armstrong, that didn't come from God's apostle. People went out in left field and taught all kinds of things. Ministers did, individuals did.

You're to hold on to what God gives you. You are to protect and guard what God gives you. And He doesn't work with us, as a whole, then, in that regard, on an individual basis, like He did some in the Old Testament. We are a structure, a body, a Church, an organized spiritual Body.

So, it says here, "when you have eaten and are full." Eaten of what? God's way of life. That's exactly what Laodicea is all about: that it's easy to become lukewarm and begin to drift and begin to let down spiritually because you have all you need.

If we could just learn from the hideous, sick, perverted example of so many of the evangelists at headquarters in the latter days of Herbert Armstrong. They wouldn't come to the bible studies where he was speaking. They wouldn't always come to a Sabbath service where he was, because after all, they were able to have piped into their homes the sermons. So, they could just sit at home. They didn't need the fellowship. They didn't need to be right there on the spot where you can be more moved in that regard, and not lounging around and taking it easy, in that regard, and thinking, "Well, I don't need to be there at God's apostle's feet," in essence. That's the mindset on a spiritual plane.

So, there are many people who didn't show up. There was one account that was in a sermon that was recorded that's well known. He looked out in the audience. He stopped what he was saying. And He said, "Is there..." I'm paraphrasing some of that, "Is there any minister that's here today?" Because he didn't see them. He didn't see the evangelists up on the front row or toward the front, as he should have been able to see. They weren't there! Not a one! Now, I think there was one further back at the back that held up his hand, an elder in the Church, and that's not what he was talking about.

Pretty miffed. I can understand that. Because here he's pouring out what God has given to him, of things that people think that they didn't need to hear. "Well, he's talking about those two trees again. He's talking about the tree of good and evil," and "Here we go again, the two trees in the garden." And it's like they'd heard everything they needed to hear, forgetting that you have to constantly build, and God constantly was giving more to build upon the knowledge that was there. And they didn't grasp that anyway. They didn't even grasp what he was saying in the first place. They were receiving it on a physical plane because of their attitude, because of their thinking, because they were rich and full and didn't think they needed more.

That's our history, and it's something that's going to be preached throughout the Millennium and in the Great White Throne, because it's one of the greatest lessons that can ever be taught to anyone that comes into God's Church. Look at what can happen when you get to that point in time. Beware, lest when you're full, this attitude begins to take over your life and you begin to think of yourself in bigger ways, that you don't need more, that you don't need to put as much energy into it, and that maybe there are things that you can see that maybe God's apostle doesn't grasp and see. Because that's what was happening by a bunch of the ministry. Pathetic. Sick. It really is sick.

But it's one of the greatest lessons that can ever be taught, of what can happen when a human being has God's spirit working in them, and then our attitude that can change toward that over time. So, that's what these warnings are about. Just like what we read there in Hebrews.

So, it says, **then beware unless you forget the Eternal.** That's exactly what happened during Laodicea. People began to forget the truth. Because that's what the Eternal is. The Eternal is the word of God. The Eternal is the truth that He gives to His people to grasp, to see, to know, and to understand, which can't be seen nor understood except by His holy spirit.

The world can't see it. They can't go into their Bibles and dig into it and learn what you have been given in the mind. They can't! It's a great proof. You can try to convince people. You can try to sit down with people and show them tons of scriptures and go over articles with them, and it doesn't do a lick of good, doesn't produce diddly-squat unless God is in it, unless God is doing it, unless God is drawing someone. That's the only way they can grasp and understand it. Awesome!

...unless you forget the Eternal who brought you out of the land of Egypt. I look back on our history, and I think, what a horrible thing we had to live through, and yet it's one of the greatest lessons that can ever be learned. Awesome! Because it's a great experience to understand what human beings are capable of.

...who brought you out of the land/the ways of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Just like it says as we read there in **Hebrews 10:35—Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of patient endurance.** You know, to persevere, to be patient in it. **...so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.** So, we go through this period of time of learning to do God's will, of seeking to do God's will, and in time we'll receive the promise of what it's all about, being changed into Elohim.

Hebrews 10:37—For yet a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay. It won't wait any longer. When that time is there, it's going to happen quickly. **Now, the just shall live by faith.** It's a beautiful thing to live by what we've been given to believe, that choice that is constantly before us, the choices we have to make day by day by day in our life. And sometimes we let down, sometimes, as human beings, it's a natural proclivity to let down. That's why God tells us to watch, to be on guard, to keep, keep close what He's given to us.

But if anyone draws back... Because that's what happened, happens, and did happen during Laodicea. **My soul has no pleasure in them.** So, it's a very serious thing to let down in what God has revealed to us and given to us, that we have to treasure if we will treasure it always. It's our life, indeed. It's our life. Because God says, "This day I set before you life and death. Choose life." It's not a one-time choice, it's choice... There are choices that are made day by day by day by day. And if we let down in those choices we make, and how we think, and what we're doing?

Deuteronomy 6. Going back now and continuing on in Deuteronomy 6. Now we come to verses that haven't been understood well, verses that reveal the importance of our initial commitment to God from the beginning.

Deuteronomy 6:13—You shall fear the Eternal your God and serve Him. It means to fear to not go the way God has revealed, to go against that, to choose something different, to be fearful of that. Because there are going to be a lot, not just a few, who won't ever be able to turn back. It's not a small thing to turn one's back on Christ, to turn away from what God has given to us.

And those are going to serve as examples in the Millennium and in the Great White Throne, of just how serious God's way of life truly is, that if you begin to let down, you begin to back away from there is something that can happen to the mind that is really quite evil in that regard. You begin to lose what God gave because you can only keep it and hold on to it by God's spirit. And if you begin to lose all that, what do you have? Well, you go back to what you can reason about and what you can think, and if you're not careful, within time, if you won't repent, it becomes what your mind is. It becomes set, candidly, in evil, by wrong choices.

I think there are those who believe that, well, if they leave, they can maybe come back when they see all these things starting to happen in the world, and then they'll get with it and they'll come back and they'll repent. And that will be a kind of repentance that's just wanting to save your hide, not one that is genuine and true because you agree with God, because you love God, and have loved God. Or perhaps in the Great White Throne, that if you do have to live a second time that surely then with a hundred years you're going to have plenty of time then and you're going to know and you're going to know for sure then.

Well, we should know now. If we can't, haven't proven to ourselves about God and how we're able to know the things we know, all the truths we're able to know that no one else can see, that's in your mind? Awesome! That's why when I think about what happened during Laodicea, it's shocking, that even the most... Well, can't call them minor of teachings because all teachings are important, but some weren't as important to our spiritual lives as others, such as the eras of the Church. We can grow, and we could grow, and many have grown throughout the two thousand years without knowledge of who the Church eras were. But to have been given that and then to lose it? And because it was lost, people couldn't see themselves. They couldn't see the one thing, after the Apostasy, of what they had to repent of. Because it wasn't being taught anymore, and it wasn't believed anymore by the majority.

We were Laodicea. We became lukewarm. We fell asleep. And because of that, just as it says, God had to spew us out of His mouth. Means separated from the Body of Christ, which is a fearful, scary thing. Truly is. And if one can't acknowledge that, what happens? You can't repent. And as a matter of fact, you can become filled with pride because of your own thinking, and you think, "I'm a Philadelphian. I never

bought into that Laodicean stuff.” And they don’t understand, “Oh, yes, you did, and yes, you are.” So, losing certain knowledge once it’s been given, it can be disastrous – which that was disastrous.

You shall fear the Eternal, your God, and serve Him, and shall take oath in His name. Means “to” or “before” His name. Now, the King James says, “**You shall swear by His name.**” Now, that right there ought to tell you that something is wrong with the translation and the understanding, because God makes it very clear we are not to swear by His name, to use His name as though somehow we can swear and say, “By God’s name, I’m telling the truth.” So, we don’t do that.

So, what is this all about? Well, we do take an oath before God when we begin our process that is spiritual. It’s done at baptism. It’s our word to God Almighty that we believe His Son was the Messiah, the Passover, through whom we’re able to have our sins forgiven us, and that we give our lives to God. Not ours, it’s God’s. That’s an oath. It’s our word before God. That’s what we’ve declared before God. And we go under the water to acknowledge that on a physical plane, to picture that, to be a sign of that, of our commitment, to yield ourselves to that process that God has placed before us.

So, “You shall take oath in His name.” We do, then, at that time. The Church of God, the Body of Christ. Incredible.

You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you. Now, we can look at this and look at it on a physical plane and see for them as a physical people, yes, indeed, they weren’t to do those things (which they constantly did). They would get wrapped up. That’s why God told them not to take wives of these other gods in other nations, because it was about the gods they served, and they would talk, and people would give in to it after a time. That’s what Solomon did in the end of his life. Horrible. He started listening to his wives and wanted to please them. Other gods. Mind-boggling.

“You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the people who are around you.” Now, for us, that’s spiritual. What are those other gods? So often it starts right here. We make ourselves God. That’s what Joe Tkach Sr. did because he began to rely upon himself and began to use his thinking in his mind of what he was able to do. Someone who begins to get to a point in time where they don’t need the Church anymore? Where they don’t need to be taught anymore? Where they don’t need what God has given them, what Joshua the Christ sacrificed his life in order to give them, and they want something else? Well, that something else has become their god. It’s as simple as that. And it was done up here in the mind of selfishness, that they want something else. “I want something else,” whatever that is, ever how perverted and distorted that is, no matter how small it is. Perhaps “I want more money every month. That’s why I don’t tithe.” Perhaps, “I want more money, and I don’t want to give Holy Day offerings to God.”

Perhaps, “I want someone else than what I’m supposed to have, and I want them so badly.” And the majority in the Church, I believe, and then talking to others, I believe, in the ministry through times past, this has been the greatest weakness of all of people, because they wanted someone else that was

unlawful to have, that that was more important than God, than the truth, than fellowship in God's Church. And they wanted that, they got it, and you think, "Well, I wonder how long that lasted." Because I know how those things go. It's horrible what people's lives turn into.

We're here for a short time. We're here for a short time in this human life and God has put before us that which is so hard for the human mind to comprehend, that this is a means to an end, an opportunity once we're given it to latch on to something that is greater than our minds can comprehend, the value, the riches of it, so far beyond anything you can have in this physical life. And if we can't make that distinction in our minds, then we're missing the mark. Every year, like I said, people go.

You shall not go after the gods, the gods of the people who are all around you, things that other people do because that's what you want to do. **...for the Eternal your God is a jealous God among you**. Now, not in the way we think as human beings of being jealous. But He is for His way of life. You know why? Because it's the only way that you can be saved. It's the only way that you can have eternal life. It's the only way you can become a part of His Family and have everlasting life. And so, He's jealous and zealous for that for you, for us. He wants us to be able to have that. He desires us, that we be able to have that, and He works to give it to us. He gives us sermons on a regular basis to help us to be stirred up, to recognize how important these things are, of how precious His way of life really is, to be constantly reminded of those things.

...unless the wrath (King James says "anger") **of the Eternal your God becomes kindled against you and destroy you from the face of the earth**. Because, you see, that's what happens if we make the wrong choices. It's judgment. It's the judgment that we all have to pay if we disobey, if we won't repent. Anyone who doesn't repent, this is what happens.

So, this verse here is very poorly translated when you think of what it says in the King James, "You shall swear by His name." It's not translated word by word from Hebrew to English. Rather, it's an interpretation of what's being stated by the context of their understanding, of those who have translated things like this. It's by their perception of what's being said. It's not because it's word by word by any measure. Sad. So many things are done that way. ...and what it means "to swear" or "to take oath," just about keeping your word.

You know, there used to be a time in this country where "Your word is your bond." It's a common phrase. It used to be really well known. "My word is my bond." That's how people, in many cases, lived when it came to a loan, a transaction of some sort. People tended to keep their word. It's not like today. You think, well, we've really gone down the toilet in what's being produced in the world today compared to what it used to be like fifty years ago, and before that.

So, your word. Do we keep our word? So easy for the world today to lie, or to twist and distort things. You just watch the news, and it's done constantly, and by parties constantly on both sides. They show one side of something. They don't show the whole truth because that takes away from them, they think.

It's just a common way of mankind that's become kind of like it was, amazingly so, in the days of Noah. People became expert at deception, at lying. And so, the world is that way today, very much so. Incredible.

So again, this is not a matter of swearing by use of God's name, but it's about taking an oath, our word to our God. And we have to be careful what we tell God that we are giving our word to when it comes to this way of life, to what He's offering us. It's a declaration that your word is true, and you will do as you promised, as you have declared.

So, most all translations I looked at give the concept of swearing by His name. That's basically how they are. Which is ludicrous. Only one translation came kind of close, in that regard, and it says, "**And promise that you will be loyal to Him.**" Because that's really the context. It's not a matter of swearing by God's name. What good does that do? It's something we're not supposed to do. But we are, and we do give promise to God one primary time in our life – when we come to baptism, when we have hands laid upon us. Incredible. And our promise, basically, that God is... "This is the way of life I want to live the rest of my life." It's a commitment forever, nothing to interfere with it.

So, let's look at some places how this word is used in scripture. Let's turn over to Genesis 21. Because it's kind of interesting, some of the history of some of this, of how this came about, and how God even used it later on to teach and to instruct, of something that Abraham was inspired to do.

Genesis 21:22—Now, it came to pass at the time that Abimelech (he was a king amongst the Philistines at that time), **and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, God is with you in all that you do.** Now, he could see that there was something special. He didn't grasp and comprehend, but he believed that Abraham was a kind of honorable man who lived honorably before his God, and he recognized this on a physical plane.

Now, therefore... It's not a matter of "swear"; it's "take an oath." That's what the context is all about. **Take an oath to me, if you will, by God.** In other words, **before your God, that you will not deal falsely with me.** So, it wasn't swearing by God, but it was a matter by your integrity and what you believe. "Take an oath/Make an oath with me now, and I'll enter into it with you that we will make promise to one another and keep our word in it." And so, he knew the importance of Abraham's God and his relationship, and what was reflected by things he said and how he lived. And so, he was relying on that, that "You're an honorable man," in essence, saying something to that nature, and asking him to do this.

...that you will not deal falsely with me, with my son, or with my offspring; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt. So, he believed enough in what Abraham had reflected and what he knew about him to that point in time that if he would make this promise with him, he believed he would keep it.

Then Abraham said, I will... And so, they say here “swear” but it’s **I will give oath**. “I’ll give my word.” That’s all he’s saying. It’s not a matter of swearing by God’s name at all.

Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well... so, it goes on with the story, **a well of water which Abimelech’s servants had seized. So, Abimelech said, I do not know who has done this thing.** In other words, who of his people has done this thing, seizing a well that was Abraham’s and what Abraham said to him. **...you did not tell me, nor have I heard it until today.** In other words, “I didn’t know that. I was unaware that this had happened.”

Then Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and two of them made a covenant. It’s making a promise. It’s like signing a contract. That’s what it’s about. “My word,” that this is going to be fulfilled to each other.

Now, Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. Then Abimelech asked Abraham... So, it’s kind of an interesting story and how this all developed. **What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?** And we understand seven, completeness. And this is what he did in that regard, his word, what he was going to do, what they were going to do.

And he said, You will take these seven ewe lambs from my hand, that they may be my witness. “This is my testimony.” So, people have done different things over time. Sometimes, like [spit] shake, “My word,” whatever that is that you do, people have done, signed a contract, whatever it is, “I’m going to stick to it; I want to keep my word. We’ll make this agreement between ourselves.” And that’s what it’s talking about here.

So again here, he’s saying **that these may be my witness.** In other words, my testimony, proof of my declaration to you of truth **that I have dug this well.** “It’s my word. I dug the well. It’s my well.” And so, he expected to have it back. And so, he’s saying, “This is my word that I’m declaring to you right now.”

Therefore, he called that place Beersheba, The Well of Oath. That’s what Beersheba means. Or more perfectly in Hebrew, “The Well of Seven.” And it’s used that way in the Old Testament so often after that, “The Well of Seven” because of what it means, “my word,” the signing, the declaration of, the witness of my word. So, when an oath was given and this word was used, it meant a lot to people when they understood where it came from.

...because the two of them swore an oath there. They declared an oath. That’s all it means. They declared an oath to each other at that time. That’s in the New King James. But the King James says, **“Because there they swore, both of them.”** So, anyway, it’s just, again here, it’s a matter of what they declared, what they promised by oath.

Thus, they made a covenant... So, it goes beyond that. And this becomes important as we go along because we understand what God says about a covenant. It was in the Old Testament and then a

covenant in the New Testament. And an oath has to be given to enter into that covenant. God keeps His word and gives that to us, then it's up to us to keep our word, the oath we make to God.

Thus, they made a covenant, which is "A binding agreement by the promise of their word." That's what it means: "A binding agreement by the promise of their own word." ...**at Beersheba. So, Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines.** Incredible story. And so, it's carried on as time goes on in the actual word and how it's used as we go forward, this "Well of Seven."

Deuteronomy 7:6, it goes on to say here now, **For you are a holy people to the Eternal, your God.** Now, Israel, the physical nation, they were a physical nation. So, what is "a holy people?" A people that are sanctified by God, by God's spirit. They were not sanctified by God's spirit. So, all these things that happened in the Old Testament, and so many of these things that are written, are, as it were, a blueprint, a diagram of that which would be accomplished, what God would do with those He would offer to be part of His Family, His Kingdom, and the oath that they would enter into, that God entered into long before, for any who would enter into it.

For you are a holy people to the Eternal, your God; the Eternal, your God, has chosen you to be a people for Himself. They were chosen to be a physical nation and given opportunity above all nations. And then their history, primarily... That's why there is the ark of the testimony, the ark of the covenant, why it means so much. Because, again here, it is about, again, a people that God has given opportunity for Himself in the sense of what it pictures. Because for them their witness wasn't too good. The ark of the witness. The law that was there, they couldn't keep it, they couldn't do it. That's what the witness is. The ark of the witness is against them because no one, unless God was working with them on a spiritual plane, could live by what God had given. Incredible.

You are a holy people to the Eternal, your God; the Eternal, your God, has chosen you to be a people for Himself. It's talking to the Church. It's talking to God's people. ...**a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.** Because that's God's purpose and God's desire for all, that when He gives that opportunity to anyone, that they're able to become a part of something, to change, to grow, to be transformed until they're able to become part of His family, a treasure to God, His children.

The Eternal did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples. About a physical people? Did He give them His love fully, completely? Not at all. When you understand what it means that God gives His love, and when that begins by the use of the word grace because of the forgiveness of sin, that's when God pours out His love upon His people, His children. It wasn't about a physical nation. They were there to set an example of something (just like Laodicea, it was allowed to happen) to teach.

Going on here: “For you were the least of all people.” So, if we grasp our calling, everyone has sin in their life, “the least of all” in God’s creation. All people have sin, and they have nothing, absolutely nothing but a temporary physical life. Because all human beings have sin.

And so we, when God called us, we were the least of all people, we were amongst the least of all people. We had sin in our life, and there was only one thing awaiting, as it is for all human beings, death. Unless we’re able to be forgiven of sin and can receive the impregnation of God’s holy spirit, enter into a covenant relationship with God, and a process of transformation begins in the mind as the children of God, the begotten children of God. Because no one is a child of God until they’re begotten. That’s when it starts. But it doesn’t mean it will come to birth.

And therein is the great error that we’ve held on to in times past, thinking that everyone who is baptized will be in God’s Kingdom. Not at all true. Far, far, far from the truth. Because we can become a miscarriage by our own choices on a spiritual plane. That is a horrible shame, but that’s a reality of life because that’s the way God established it. It isn’t owed to everyone to be born into His Family, not by any measure. It’s through a process of choices. And if we don’t choose it and fight for it with all of our being, seeking to place God first, seeking to live up to an oath that we made before God?

Verse 7—The Eternal did not set His love on you, nor choose you... We have been chosen by God. We have to be called by God. That’s how it begins. **...because you were more in number than any other people.** It wasn’t because of any greatness we had, obviously. On the contrary, God has called small numbers through time in the Church compared to the world and what the world has.

...but because the Eternal loves you. That’s when God begins to truly love us with His love. Before that, He can’t and is not pouring out His love on the world. Because that means granting forgiveness of sin, and that can’t be offered until an individual is called. And God’s purpose has not been to call large numbers of people by any measure, but a specific amount to work with, to mould and fashion for a specific structure within the temple itself that we do not fully comprehend by any measure, that will be exactly 144,000 plus Joshua the Christ. Incredible. And then after that, way beyond that, then, in building.

...but because the Eternal loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He has given oath to your fathers. This is the oath. It wasn’t a physical one of a physical covenant that was made, because God knew full well they couldn’t live it, they couldn’t do it, they couldn’t keep it without His holy spirit. It was only on a physical plane and a physical relationship to teach. And the greatest of those teachings, in so many ways, the law was given on Pentecost, and they couldn’t keep it. Only by understanding Pentecost and truly what God gave through the pouring out of His holy spirit, because it’s only through that that we can keep His way of life. It has to be in here through begettal and growth, and development. Beautiful picture.

...but because the Eternal loves you and because He would keep the oath, which He had given to your fathers, the Eternal has brought you out with a mighty hand. He's brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand, with great power, the power of His holy spirit. It's a marvellous thing that happens in the mind when all of a sudden we see and know the truth. It's beyond words, what it means, when He gives the impregnation of His holy spirit within the spirit mind of a human being, within that spirit, within that essence that's there that makes us unique and different. And now, a measure of God that's within us that can grow and develop into a separate, unique individual in the God Family. Awesome!

...the Eternal has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage. He didn't redeem them from the house of bondage, from Egypt. He brought them out, delivered them out from that they wouldn't have to suffer under any longer. But this goes way beyond that because it has to do with the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which had to do with the seed that would come in time, the seed that would follow, Joshua the Christ.

...and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. So, that's on a physical plane to a point. Spiritually, is what it's all about. We're delivered from the one who typifies Pharaoh of Egypt, who is the king over Egypt, Lucifer, Satan. Incredible! From his grasp. Awesome!

Verse 9—Therefore, know that the Eternal your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant... God keeps His word. We're the problem as human beings. **...who keeps covenant and graciousness for a thousand generations for those who love Him and keep His commandments; and He repays (recompense, pay, reward – that's what the word means) those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them.** So, there has to be payment for a refusal to accept God, for a refusal to turn one's self, against God once we have the impregnation of His holy spirit within us. And it means what it says. It comes to a time, if a person does not repent, this is what happens. They will be destroyed.

He will not be slack, in other words, "deter" or "tarry" with those who hate Him; He will repay them to his face.

Verse 11—Therefore, you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments. It's the same as when it talks about in the very beginning, to dress and keep. That word "keep." To dress and keep what God has given. And the greatest treasure that God has given us is of Himself, is His word, His truth that is a matter of the spirit that we've been blessed to have in the mind. Awesome!

...you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, the judgments which I command you today, to observe them. Then it shall come to pass, because you listen to these judgments, and keep (that word again). We have to hear. We have to listen. Not just hear them but listen. That means a response on our part. What do we do? If we're truly listening to God, it's one thing to hear what God says; it's another thing, in that respect, to listen because the desire is to put it into practice, to live it. **...and keep, and do them.** That's what it's about.

...that the Eternal, your God, will keep with you the covenant. So, God will keep His covenant with us. But if we don't, if we don't keep our word, if we're not faithful to the promise we made and we begin to do things and not repent when we should, well, then God won't keep His covenant with us because we've broken it. That's the bottom line. And that's happened to a lot of people in the past two thousand years. Is it a small thing? ...that somehow, in the Great White Throne, or some other time, they can repent, and it's just kind of taken lightly like that? Or is it far more serious because of what it does to the mind when one makes such choices in the first place? Time will reveal it all.

...that the Eternal, your God, will keep with you the covenant and the graciousness (which is about grace) **which He gave oath to your fathers.** So, it's about a covenant. It's about a covenant that would come in time. It wasn't about a physical one to a physical nation; it's about a spiritual one.

Deuteronomy 8, going on down to the next chapter. **Deuteronomy 8:11—Beware...** This warning is given over and over again in scripture, just like we read in Hebrews. "Beware." "Be careful." "Be on guard." Because this is your life. That's what we're telling God, this is... "I have chosen life."

Beware that you do not forget. This comes from a Hebrew root that means "to mislay." To mislay something and you don't really know where it is, you've mislaid it; it really wasn't all that important, and whatever, it wasn't guarded and protected like it should have been, of necessity, something of greater value. So, it's like being oblivious to something or a lack of attention to which leads to forgetting. That's how the word is used.

So again here, **Beware that you do not forget the Eternal your God by not keeping...** In other words, this word here, "by not keeping" in the sense of being on guard, to watch over, because of the value that we see in it. **...by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today.** So, I think of two thousand years. I think of since I've been in Philadelphia first and then on through Laodicea, and then in the period of time we're in now and I think of all the people...all the people, all the ministers, of all people who had the kind of training that they did, that did some of the things in going a different way from what God had offered. Quite mind-boggling.

...lest when you have eaten and are full... It's that Laodicean thing again. "Unless when you have eaten and are full." Because it's a mindset. It's a type of thinking that can happen when people begin to let down on a spiritual plane.

...and have built beautiful houses and dwell there. Well, I think of a lot of beautiful houses that existed going up through Philadelphia that were abandoned in Laodicea, that were abandoned during the Apostasy, places to dwell. Beautiful, when God's in it. I think of some of those ministers I think I mentioned last Sabbath, or even the Sabbath before, some I knew one day, the next day, talking on a phone, I didn't know them. That beautiful house was gone. That relationship was gone. God wasn't there.

“When you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses.” All the work! That’s why we were told (I think we read some of that last Sabbath), you know, you work, you build, and the time that’s spent, and then later on to let down and to let it go by the wayside because you want something different than what God has offered? That really is quite mind-boggling, it truly is, when you think of it in that context. What is more dear to a person? Amazing.

“And have built beautiful houses and dwelt there.” Many people have dwelt in the Body of Christ, have dwelt in the Church of God, have dwelt in their own lives in something that was unique and different, that became different over time, thinking that became different, and then something else came along in thinking and went by the... It can go by the wayside if we don’t keep, if we’re not...if we don’t watch and stay on guard and understand we have to stay close to God on a continuing basis. You have to fight for, you have to persevere in this way of life, or you can lose it all.

But if it’s of great value to us, then that’ll scare us. We don’t want to lose it. We want to hold fast. And that’ll motivate something else within you then.

Lest when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwelt there, in essence, **and your herds and your flocks multiply...** In other words, the wealth, the increase. Do we grasp how God has blessed us in increase and what we have? **...and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all you have is multiplied.** What is of greater value? That which is spiritual, that which God gives to us and offers us, or something else? Because that’s what it comes down to. Do we really recognize the wealth that we really have, what God’s put before us, what He wants to give to us? Because I’m astounded so many lose it.

...that your heart becomes lifted up. I hate this more than anything else when I see within the Body people’s hearts who become lifted up and they become self-important in their own thinking, in their own mind about themselves and their importance. Because it shows. It shows to me, anyway. It’s a spiritual thing. And when it’s there, the least little bit of it, it’s a putrid thing. It’s a deep irritant. I hate it when it happens. And it’s happened a lot in God’s Church, over and over and over again. People become lifted up. Any time someone chooses something different, begins to push themselves forward, whatever it might be, in what they know, what they understand, what they think. All worthless.

...that your heart becomes lifted up, and you forget the Eternal, your God. It happens. It happens way too much. **...who brought you out of the land of Egypt.** It’s not about a physical Egypt, not about physical Israel. Yeah, those things happened, but it’s all a diagram, it’s all a picture of what was to happen later on with God’s people as He takes us out of Egypt, out of sin, and gives us that opportunity to keep coming out of it more and more, to become more thoroughly cleansed.

...from the house of bondage; who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock. In other words, yes, there are physical things that happened for Israel, but so

much to understand what these things mean spiritually, of what God provides for us, water, living water in a powerful, powerful way.

...who fed you in the wilderness with manna. And we're blessed to eat the true bread of life. People can be more in awe of something physical like that over forty years than the reality of you can have forty years of eating something far more powerful that works to change the mind, not to feed the stomach.

...which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might try you. Allow us to go through the fire, to be refined. That's love. God doesn't intervene instantly in our lives all the time to take us away from troubles and trials, and hardships. We go through them. With God, it helps change things in here. It helps us to address things and see things in a way that we otherwise couldn't without His holy spirit, without that working power in our minds.

So, that's what it's talking about here, "that He might humble you." So, humility is just the opposite of one's heart being lifted up. It's seeing ourselves for what we are and recognizing our great need for God Almighty day by day by day.

...that He might humble you, and that He might try you, to do you good in the end. That's what God desires, that when it's all said and done, we can become a part, we've gone through it, we persevered, we fought the fight with Him.

...then you say in your heart, My power (so, this was a warning), **My heart**, in essence, **My power, and the might of my hand, has gained me this wealth.** So, it's an exact opposite of what it should be. God desires to give us Elohim. He desires to work with us as we go through every kind of hardship and difficulty of human life in this short time, in a temporary dwelling, so we can learn the greatest things about what His purpose and plan is all about and be a part of it.

And yet this happens, that people get lifted up with pride and begin to look to themselves, to their own understanding. And that's a powerful thing. And they count that as wealth. Think, sick, sick, sick.

Verse 18—Now, you shall remember the Eternal your God. And that's day by day by day. **...for it is He who gives you power to get wealth.** It comes from God's spirit. It comes from Him working in our lives. He's the one who gives us more and more wealth, of His way of life, of His truth, of character that's being developed within us.

...that He may establish His covenant. So, God has made a covenant, but He wants it to become firmly established in our life. That covenant is there to get us through to the end when it's complete, so He can give to us what He promised, what He wants to give, to be in His Family.

...that He may establish His covenant, which He gave oath to your fathers, as it is to this day. So again, that oath that was given that is about something far greater that is on a spiritual plane that begins with the Messiah, that is a part of sharing with the Messiah forever. Incredible!

Then it shall be, if you, by any means, forget the Eternal your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify you this day that you shall surely perish. Powerful words. And God means what He says.

As the nations which the Eternal destroys before you, so you will perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the Eternal, your God. What a horrible thing. Every year. It hurts to think human beings can receive the wealth that God has offered, the promise, the covenant that God offers, His oath, and we can move away from ours, from what we committed ourselves to when we gave our life to God. It happens.

So again, God has given His oath to us that we can inherit all things in everlasting life in His Family, Elohim. God's oath is promised to us if we keep our oath to Him. We gave our oath to God that we would be faithful in seeking to place Him first in our life. That's what we said – with all of our heart, with all of our life – because that's what's at stake. That we would seek to continue to dwell in the Body of Christ, that we would persevere.

Part 3 next Sabbath.