

We'll continue today in the current series, *Learning Through Jonah*, this being *Part 3*.

Last Sabbath, we were covering part of the story in Jonah, in the first four verses of chapter 2, and we're going to begin there again this Sabbath because there's more to build upon what was said in verse four.

So, we're going to begin right off here with **Jonah 2:1—Then Jonah prayed to the Eternal from the fish's belly. And he said, I cried out to the Eternal because of my affliction, and He answered me. Out of the belly of the grave, I cried, and You heard my voice.** So, he knew that if he didn't have intervention, this was it. A kind of a weird situation, but amazing how God used that. Again, not by chance that all these things were happening. It was part of God's plan and God's purpose. It was part of God's purpose to use this as well concerning Christ going to be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights as well.

For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the floods or the waters surrounded me and heaped up waves passed over me. Then I said, I have been cast out of Your sight. So, a realization here that he was obviously cut off from God and didn't have God's favor, didn't have God's help, or this wouldn't have happened. He hadn't even repented.

So, he understood some of this part here, obviously, and his part in it, as he says, **Yet I will look again**, or as we talked about last Sabbath, **increase or add to**, in essence, **toward Your holy temple**. So, he's going to do what he should have been doing all along. Because he wasn't trying to look toward God or go before God at all before he took off on this excursion to Tarshish, as his intent was. So, again here, incredible story here.

But in this example, Jonah began again to grasp what it means to be cut off, to be cast out of God's sight. What a horrible thing. And I think of all that's happened within the Church since it began, all the people who have gone by the wayside. We've been going through a lot of this for quite some time, and I know there's a purpose and a reason for why God wants us to focus upon these things, to learn from it, and a lot of it has to do with our training and a uniqueness about our calling. Because every era, every period of time has had people being trained, molded and fashioned, prepared for specific things they're going to be doing in the future.

So, last Sabbath, we were focusing on this very thing, again, about being cut off or cast out of God's sight. This is in 2nd Timothy now. We hadn't completed what we had started there, so I'm going to go back there now, and we'll continue on.

2 Timothy 2:20—But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Now, God has allowed this for 2,000 years. And again, this is for training. There's a purpose and a reason why that is allowed, why it's even talked about that

which would stay with the wheat, and that which looks like it but isn't, and the tares. And so again, there's a lot to be learned from those kinds of things. We have to go through many things. For what purpose? To learn how to judge. It's a process we go through in learning about God's way and growing in a conviction to God's way or giving in and being pulled in a different direction, going in a different direction, and trying and testing us to see where we stand and how we stand.

And so, all these things are all for a purpose that God gives us. We go through many experiences in order to learn, in order to mature, in order to grow, in order to grow in character, especially, and oneness with God, agreement with God. That's the big thing, becoming more at one. That's what reconciling is all about, the Day of Atonement is all about, coming into being more at one with God and of God's mind in us. That means in agreement, so that we can think in right ways and judge.

A lot of that has to do with judgment, how we judge. Thinking in the right way so we can discern and know how to deal with and work with different kinds of situations in life, and whether or not we are truly in agreement with God because those things bring it to the surface.

Therefore, if anyone cleanses themselves from the latter... From that which is dishonorable, which is a constant process we have to go through in life, all of us, no matter what. We have to see what we are, we have to desire to repent and change constantly, to grow, to conquer, to overcome, and to become more at one with God.

...they will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, and profitable for the Lord. What does it mean "profitable"? Well, for what God's molding and fashioning, the purpose of our calling, what we've been called to. Truly being profitable, fitting in, doing what we're supposed to be doing, being able to grow so that we can be used in a proper way in the future, in the place we're being prepared for. God does the construction. God does the building, in that respect, the molding and fashioning. So, it says here, **prepared for every good work.** Whatever lies in the future. Awesome.

But flee also youthful lust; but follow after righteousness... So, different ways of saying the same thing over and over again here. That which comes from God, that which is right, follow after that, desire that, work toward that. **...toward faith,** living by what God has given us to believe. **...love** (agape). That has to do with relationships and how we treat one another.

...peace—peace—with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. So again, things we have to learn, things that we don't have naturally in us. We have what is natural in the sense of drama in human life and lusts in human life, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life." Those are the things we have to work on and conquer.

And so, those things have always existed to varying degrees within God's Church. He's allowed that for that great purpose. And especially toward the end-time, of what had to be learned. Some of the greatest lessons ever that are recorded, that have been lived, that will be taught throughout the Millennium and

the Great White Throne about the Apostasy and how it came about, what happened, and that everyone, all human beings in that position, would have done the exact same thing. Sometimes people think, "Well, I wouldn't do that." You read about certain things in Sardis, "Well, I wouldn't have done that." Or whatever God has addressed in different eras, "I wouldn't...I would never do that." If you lived then that would be your battle. Whatever is in your environment is what molds and fashions you and trains you. Those are the things you have to become stronger in and fight and grow. Awesome.

But refuse foolish and undisciplined disputes. In other words, with people without proper instruction, proper education in a matter. Sometimes people will just go off on the craziest of things. Look at the world today. Some of the crazy things going on out there, and the sides people take over different issues and how nuts they become. I mean, just stark raving mad. Well, that's happened in the Church as well on a spiritual plane.

...knowing that they generate strife. So, being at one with God doesn't generate strife. Repenting and conquering and overcoming doesn't generate strife. On the contrary, it produces that which is right, peace, unity, oneness.

Now, a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient. Something we all have to grow in because that's not our natural, normal human nature.

...in humility. That's the big one, humility, because it's the opposite of the pride of life that controls the human mind of and by itself without God's spirit. And so, humility is a very precious thing. That has to do with the ability to see ourselves for what we are, the ability to see the need to change, and then the choice to fight against that. Awesome. **...in humility, correcting those who are in opposition.** So, he's talking to Timothy about those things that need to be taken care of in the Church because he's going to be working over the Church in so many of those different areas because Paul wasn't able to any longer, obviously.

...if so be that God perhaps grant them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. So, that's the goal, that's the desire, that people be able to have the ability to hear. But it has always come down to a choice, and you can't make anyone decide those things or make such choices. But to try to be there to make it available, yes, and striving to live right in order to make that hopefully better for them, easier for them.

...and that they might come to their senses. The word literally means "to return to soberness of mind." To return to a soberness of mind. What a blessing that would be if that could happen when people go off course. But so often, experience is that doesn't happen. It doesn't happen as a whole because of carnal human nature. Horrible.

...so that they might come to their senses out from the snare of the devil and being taken captive by him into his will. So, that's a scary thing, to realize that if one does become cut off from God, is cast

away from God's presence in the sense of the grace that God gives us, and says no more, we're on our own, and we're not in control of our life. People think they are, but they're not because they're swayed by other things. There will be other things out there that will take the mind farther and farther and farther away from God.

And the hope is, then, in a great resurrection, that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, because only in that, for those who have known, can a person be shaken to a point of being able to see themselves for what they are, so that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. There should be weeping and gnashing of teeth, of regretting the stupid, stupid, stupid decisions that were made when they had the chance and could have kept working at it, and some right up to the end. You think, what a horrible thing!

...fall into the snare of the devil, being taken captive by him. And yet, that's the very thing that God began to take us out of captivity of, was that power of Satan in our lives as human beings, being deceived, being turned away more from God and God's way of life, being turned more to our own selfish wants and desires, becoming more selfish, having more drama in our lives. That's the way of human nature. It's a way of life.

But or yet when wrong is done in God's Church, as someone turns away, goes away from God, then it's dealt with because God in His time will bring it to the surface. But until that time, things are allowed to happen for our training. That shouldn't be overlooked. That should be understood that everything we've ever experienced that wasn't right, that wasn't good, hopefully we've learned from it, hopefully, we become stronger because of it, more convicted, more determined not to follow suit, and to realize what can easily happen to human beings if they let down, if we're not watching and on guard, if we're not indeed going before or looking toward God's temple, if you will, on a spiritual plane in what Jonah was describing here. But the hope is, again, always repentance. That's the answer.

1st Corinthians 5. Again, a reminder here of what the Corinthians were going through. And this was at the time of, coming up to the time, if you will, and Paul used this of Unleavened Bread, the Days of Unleavened Bread and Passover season, and it addresses something here that happened on a very physical plane.

A lot of things, as you go through this, it's, as we read some of these verses, a lot of things that happened to the early Church, they were things that happened on a physical plane. They were dealing with a huge transition from a very wrong lifestyle and way of life, and the way the world had impacted people, and it took time for them to begin growing spiritually. They were growing spiritually, but again, it was taking time because of having to address so many physical changes, huge changes in their life.

Just like with the Jews, they had to work with, and it took them a long time, to begin just addressing something physically in their minds so they could begin dealing with it spiritually. How they looked upon the gentiles, how they treated gentiles, this was a big thing back then. And we don't have anything like

that, in that respect, as a whole, as they did. But as time went along, and especially for the Church in Philadelphia, and on, God has been dealing with the Church more in that regard on a spiritual plane.

Now, He worked with them on a spiritual plane, and they grew spiritually, but because of everything they went through, it's been easier for this period of time, Philadelphia, especially starting there, of God pouring out more on a spiritual plane to the Church quickly, more quickly. Even though there we still went through a lot we had to go through physically to learn balance.

Birthdays. Big deal. But some people, after going into Laodicea, and even afterwards, it's still a big deal to them. "You're observing birthdays?!" You know, wearing makeup, not wearing makeup. You know, huge things in the human mind and in the scheme of things, insanity, not sound, not balanced, not able to see the spiritual at all and what God wants us to grasp.

So, it says here in **1 Corinthians 5:1**—**It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among gentiles.** That's pretty bad. Here is God's Church, people who have been baptized, received the impregnation of God's spirit, and some of this kind of thing is going on.

Now, Corinth, and their very name, has to do with a lot of sexual immorality and the practices they had. This was rampant in this part of the world. So, this is what they had to deal with most of all. But he's saying here that even other nations, these things aren't even named among them, the things that were being allowed in what was going on here. No one was stepping up and saying that isn't right. So there's a big lesson there too. We have a responsibility when things go that far, start going off base, and something is wrong.

I think of Phineas, who took the javelin, spear, and rammed it right through two people, man and a woman, because of what they were doing in the midst of the camp of Israel. Very physical thing. Here's a very physical thing, but it has more to it than that if we grasp and understand the spiritual part of it.

...such immoralities that are not named among gentiles, that a man has his father's wife. So, it wasn't his mother; he had remarried. But he was going with his stepmother. You think, well, how sick. How perverted.

And you are puffed up... Filled with pride because you think you can get by with that, that you can do that, just like the guy that took the woman into the tent in Israel. Someone should uphold what is true and what is right. And you know what? That line of people, of priests, were very blessed after that period of time. God lifted him up, and the lineage after him—incredible—because he did the right thing. He did what was needed. He stood up for God's way of life.

...and you are puffed up, and not rather mourned that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. So, what is better, to allow it to continue or to get rid of it and say good riddance? "If you're not going to repent, not going to change, not only that, because you've gone so far, you should be

separated, period, unless there's a kind of repentance later on and it be decided, and God have mercy upon you again or whatever." But usually that doesn't happen in these kinds of cases when people have gone that far because it shows what the mind is like to do such a thing in the first place.

For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit... So what's he saying? "Present in spirit." Is his spirit going somewhere? No, he's letting you know he knows what's coming from God. He understands what is spiritual. "And I am with you in spirit. We are to be of one spirit in agreement with God, and this is what God says; this is what God wants."

For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged. So, yes indeed, it's not that hard to judge that kind of a matter in God's Church. It's pretty plain. But they weren't doing it. They weren't doing what they should have been. They weren't standing up for the truth, for God's way of life. They thought it was better to allow it or to blink the eye or wink the eye or compromise, and then maybe something will happen. Yeah, you think maybe, maybe, maybe, maybe, but what about your responsibility?

...have already judged him who has done this deed. In the name of our Lord Joshua the Christ... So now he's putting authority into it. It says, this is coming from God. This is coming from Joshua the Christ, in His name, as His servant.

...when you are gathered together along with my spirit. So, what does he mean by that again? He's in oneness with God. He's in agreement with God. This is the judgment coming from God through Joshua the Christ, and if you're not of that same spirit, then something's wrong. "This is my spirit. This is where I'm coming from, and you'd better be in the same place," basically.

...along with my spirit, with the power of Joshua the Christ, deliver such a one to Satan. What does that mean? It means separate from the Church. No longer under favor and grace being given by God. There is no more favor to give. An absolute separation.

I look back, and I so wish (but it wasn't for that purpose) that so many could have been addressed so much sooner, so much quicker during Worldwide, during Philadelphia. But again, it was for the purpose of learning, and God allowed those things for that purpose.

But to really grasp and comprehend what it means to be cut off from God, to be cast away from God's grace and favor, something really bad has to happen to the mind to get that far.

...deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. So, what does that mean? It means for the purpose of suffering. So you can see what it's like to no longer be under God's favor. Your life isn't going to go well. You're not going to be blessed by God. There's another being who may mess around with you, and you may receive certain kinds of blessings, but it'll always be for the purpose of getting you farther away from God. Whatever it is, that will just get you farther and farther and farther away from God and more deeply involved in that which is physical and carnal.

...for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit or their spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Joshua. So again, when is that? For them, it's going to be when they're resurrected. Not until then because that's when they're going to live a second physical life. And like I said earlier, hopefully and prayerfully, for everyone in that condition, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. But I already believe with all my being that that's not going to happen to everyone. Not everyone's going to be moved like that. The pride will be so strong, so hard for a lot of people who were a part of Philadelphia, who were a part of Laodicea, that they're not going to be able to come through it. Their choices were already made.

So, how far people go, well, it's always an individual thing. But hopefully, once you're resurrected back into a physical body and you realize, you come to the understanding, a stark reality, everything you learned was true about a resurrection, back into a physical life, the last hundred years, the final time of judgment becomes a reality in your life; hopefully, that will jar people to be like Jonah in the belly of the great fish, to finally realize what it's like to be cut off from God. You're hopeless. You're without hope. Unless you really want what God offers, which has to do with eternal life and a way of life to be lived. Choices, choices, choices.

Sometimes we don't grasp how greatly blessed we are and the choice we've been blessed to be able to make. Awesome.

Verse 9, jumping on down. **I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.** Now, that's physical, but for the Church should be able to go far beyond that and understand not only that, but this is a spiritual principle too. That if we can grasp the physical and conquer those things that are physical, how much more can we learn also in a spiritual plane in a relationship with God to not mess around with any other ideas or thoughts other than what God has told us and given to us that is true. Because this too has happened in a great way throughout the time of Philadelphia, and especially Laodicea, and the period of PKG. You know, different ideas that people get rather than understanding how God works with and molds and fashions the Church.

Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world. So he goes on to say, **or with the covetous or extortioners or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.** In other words, you can't do it. It's in the world, and you can't help but live in this world and deal with things in the world and have jobs in the world, and you're going to come across people in the world. But we don't deal with the world any more than that when it comes to that which is spiritual, just on a physical plane. And then our relationship should always be what is right. Our morality should always be what is right in all of our dealings with the world. But when it's in the Church, this is what Paul is pointing out, this is a totally different matter. It must be addressed. It must be dealt with.

Verse 11—But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone called a brother who is sexually immoral or covetous or an idolator. So, physically we can see those things, and those things

should be really clear, but that's where people begin to learn it. That's where the Church began to learn it as far as Corinth was concerned and others who read this epistle through time, and to realize and as different eras of God's Church even spoke of, that power that was out there that was coming out of that growing Church out of Rome and the influence it was having on the world, and not to mess with those things.

...or a reviler. One who speaks abusively or insultingly, or in a slanderous manner. **...or a drunkard or an extortioner.** You know, one who takes advantage of others, especially in a financial manner. All these things have happened in God's Church, in every era of God's Church. Why? Because we're carnal human beings called out of the world. And carnal human beings, the majority, have made wrong choices through time. "Many have been called, but few have been chosen" indeed.

No, not even to eat with such a person. So, when it comes to an environment within the Church, we come to a realization that we have to address certain things in our thinking and how we think.

Let's turn over to Jude. We are to strive to keep close to God and not turn away or move away, as Jonah tried to do, we, or people do and have done. I know we all have at some time or another, moved away in the sense of not doing the things we should be doing, when you let down in prayer, when you let down in thinking toward God, and that's not moving toward God, that's moving away from God, because basically we've been told that we're to pray day by day.

That's pray without ceasing. You don't stop. You don't give up. You keep doing it. Why? Because you know you need God's help. You know you need the power of God's spirit in your life, and you have to ask for that. That requirement is upon God's people. And if we don't grasp the need for help, then we're missing something, aren't we?

Jude 21—But you, beloved, building or build yourselves up on your most holy faith. So, every era had things that they were given to believe, to see, to understand, and they were to become stronger in their convictions of what they were given to believe and their convictions to live by what they were given to believe, their faith.

...praying in the holy spirit. So again, it's a matter of what I just went through about prayer, the importance of it, and that relationship with God of conversing with God and God hearing from you day by day. It's not about the length of time. It's about what's in us and what's in our mind, and the understanding and the growing in that that we have. It's about a relationship with God.

Keep yourselves in the love of God. Because we don't have it naturally. So, why is that so important, and why is it mentioned so often over and over again in the Bible? Because we as human beings tend to react by things on a carnal nature. I do. You do. We tend to react naturally from a carnal instinct of our human mind.

We don't naturally always, in any fashion or form, always react spiritually in our relationships with others. We have to pray about it. We have to see where it's needed. We have to ask for help in the changes where they're needed because this is the goal, to be filled with God's spirit, which means to be filled with His mind, which means to be filled with and a desire for even the way we think toward others and the way we speak to or treat others.

So, we always have work to do in that because we're human beings, carnal human beings. And it's a battle; it's a fight to fight against self. It's not a simple thing. God wants to know that we're in the fight.

...looking for the mercy of our Lord Joshua the Christ unto eternal life. Until we're there, until we're in that Family looking for that favor and that help, the grace that we want from God.

Now, going back to the story flow of Jonah. **Jonah 2:4—Then I said, I have been cast out of your sight, yet I will look again (or increase or add) toward Your holy temple.** Because he was going the opposite direction. He's going the opposite direction from where he was called, to what he was supposed to do, and he was trying to get away from God. He was going the opposite way in his actions and his thinking.

Verse 5—The water surrounded me even to my life. I can't comprehend what all he's going through. This is salt water. And if you've ever just, you know, been in a bathtub too long, you know what it does to your skin? Salt water compounds that over time. If you do that for a long period of time, for a day? It didn't even have to be gastric juices. Just the salt water alone did a number on his body. One that we can't really comprehend because none of you have spent that long at one time in saltwater, in the dark.

So, he's saying here, “the water surrounded me, even to my life...to the taking of my life.” It was hard for him to keep alive, to be able to breathe.

The deep parts, it says, **closed around me.** But this is a very awkward translation. The word “close me about” or “roundabout,” but the word here in the Hebrew has more to do with the meaning of “turning oneself” or to even “turn around.” So, in other words, it was emotion that he was feeling. Here he is inside, and he's being turned around by all these waters, or the waters are going all around him. But it all goes together. And so, that's what's being said here.

Verse 5—The waters surrounded me even to my life. The deep parts turned me around. Weeds were wrapped around my head. It's bad enough the water was there, but now the seaweed and different things are wrapping around you, and you're having a hard enough time breathing when you can.

I went down to the bottoms of the mountains. So realizing here, looking at it reversed, instead of going to the heights of mountains, you're going down to the depths, like mountains, and going deeper and coming back, and this constant motion that he was going through.

I went down to the bottoms of the mountains, the earth with its bars closed behind me forever. Yet You have brought up my life from corruption. So, when he wrote about these things, these were the

things that were in his mind. He realized how blessed he was that he was still alive when it was all over with. But as long as he was in that belly or in that fish, not so sure. Was he going to come out of this? Not so sure.

Crying out to God. Yeah. More than he ever had in his life, I'm sure. I'm sure we'd all do the same thing. All of a sudden, your mind's on God. Because that's the only thing that's going to bring you out of this. If there's any chance whatsoever, it's God Almighty.

Yet You have brought up my life from corruption. From, in essence, destruction. Doing what most life does that goes inside of a great fish and what happens to it in time. It's not a pretty sight. Wouldn't be a pretty sight.

O Eternal, my God. So he's crying out, **O Eternal, my God; when my life fainted**, in other words, he was overwhelmed, **within me I remember the Eternal**. Big times. You know, we just try to think about what you would do. Yeah, you're going to remember God. You're not going to be like he was when he started to flee and got on that ship and was sleeping because now he's getting away from God, he doesn't have to have that pressure and that stress of doing what he was going to have to do in Nineveh and didn't have to do that job and just get away from God.

Sadly, a lot of people through time have made those choices, "I just want to get away from this. I'm tired of hearing how bad I am." I've heard that before in times past. "I'm tired of hearing how bad my nature is, how bad I am." You think, well, at some point in life, if you ever want anything that God has placed before you, you're going to have to address it. Because your nature stinks. Mine stinks. We all stink. Duh. Big deal. Just go to work on it. Fight it. "But I'm getting tired of hearing about it, I've just heard it so much. So I'm going to have more peace out there, not having to think about it." That's the thinking. I'm going to have more peace. Do what you want to do. Yep, that's right, you can. Stupid choice when it comes to God's way of life. Incredible.

What do people really believe? At what point does a mind start going away from and losing? Choices. Choices. Choices.

When my life fainted, was overwhelmed within me, I remembered the Eternal, and my prayer went up to You. A lot of them. Probably didn't cease a whole lot. Probably went up a lot. Probably pretty hard to go to sleep, to think about anything else, but about being able to survive. Because that's a normal thing human beings do. Survival, living. How are you going to live through this?

...and my prayer went up to You into Your holy temple. Well, too bad it takes that to jar oneself. But whatever it takes, you know what? So be it. If it takes a resurrection to another physical life, so be it. At least there's that opportunity then to be able to address everything that was put in the back, in the background, and ignored from God. Now there's really no other choice but to address it. The world's under one government. The world has only one truth. What is your choice going to be? And so the

opportunity is going to be there. Choices, choices, again. It's incredible to me that so many won't make the right choices, though.

I think what we've covered here recently in **Revelation 2:4**. I just want to read it to you because it's along those same lines. **Nevertheless, I have this against you that you have left your first love.** You know, again, it's that moving in the wrong direction. And where does that become or come to a point where that can begin to be lost in a person's life? That love of God's way of life, that love of the truth that God has given to us. And not only the truth, but we're able to build upon it or even add to it. How, you know, incredibly blessed. How blessed are we?

So again, instead of leaving it, to embrace it even more so, to be even more thankful for it as we grow.

Remember... See, remember, don't forget. Because Jonah had, in essence. He was trying to forget. He was trying to get away from it. That's what happens in the human mind. You try to forget. You try to forget anything that might cause you to feel guilty. Well, feeling guilty for the right reasons is a good thing. It can draw you to repentance.

But human nature doesn't like that. It doesn't want to feel guilty. You know what it normally does? It's somebody else's fault. Somebody else is responsible. We as human beings, as a whole, by carnal human nature, don't look at ourselves in the sense of acknowledging, "Every choice I make is my choice, and whatever happens is my fault." Instead, there are reasons why it's somebody else's. "It's because of what you said," or "because of what you did," or "because of this," or "because of that," or whatever it might be. We don't own it. We don't own our choices as human beings. This is what this is talking about. Incredible.

Remember, therefore, where you have fallen. What happened? What were your choices?

Repent. Incredible. The formula is so easy, so simple. But to the human mind, sometimes so obscure because of our human resistance to fight against that very thing of owning it, owning our choices and our decisions. You can't blame anyone for anything. We can only blame self.

Does that mean people don't do wrong? Yeah, people do wrong all the time. But how does it affect you? Are they responsible for your wrong reactions? Never. We're responsible for our wrong actions, reactions, and choices.

Repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand. What does that mean? He's going to take the holy spirit from you. You're not going to have access to it anymore. You're going to be cast out. —**unless you repent.**

Deuteronomy 8. It's incredible how much God has said those very things about remembering Him. Never forget. Because that's a tendency of carnal human nature, to forget, to get away from, to want to not want to have to think about self and the guilt of self, or even address it, or face up to it.

Deuteronomy 8:1. So many simple, basic things here given to the Israelites in the very beginning, and yet it wasn't for them. They could only deal with it on a physical plane to a point. It's on a spiritual plane for the Church, for God's people.

Deuteronomy 8:1—Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Eternal, your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. Meaning to fear going away from Him, to fear what's going to happen if you disobey. Because the reality is there is judgment, and we either receive that for doing wrong or we can receive that for doing right, and this is addressing those things. The reason fear comes along, should be there, is we would fear going against God. We would fear turning away from God, moving away from God. Jonah had to learn that very quickly the hard way.

For the Eternal, your God, is bringing you into a good land. And where are we headed? Far, far above and beyond anything that they could ever hope or dream of. That doesn't even come close. That was just all physical. And what we have is so much greater. It's absolutely mind-boggling.

...a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs. See, when I read that, it's not physical. It's not about all this abundance that you can grow things with and so forth and have the fruit. It should be spiritual. The waters of life that God gives to us that is spiritual, that we can grow and have fruit in our life, and partake of and have. Anyway, on and on it goes.

But again, here, **fountains of waters and springs that flow out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees, of pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey.** In other words, you reap so much with God's way of life. And the closer we draw to God, the more we can have that on a spiritual plane until it really becomes fulfilled when we're spirit. Awesome.

A land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing.

I'm working on a chapter now that kind of blows my mind when we come to understand what's beyond the 7,100 years. And the more you think about and focus on some of those things, the more incredible it becomes. You think all the world has is, after death, some kind of nirvana, some kind of heaven, whatever that means, some kind of clouds, some kind of people getting wings or something. Stupid, goofy things, physical things, in the sense of what they can think of in their mind. Nothing on a spiritual plane of what it means to be spirit, what it means to be in the God Family, what it means of what's going to be done out there in the universe, and why it's there in the first place. Awesome.

We really can't grasp it fully, but we can begin to look at it and think about it and realize this is awesome. There's never going to be a dull time. There's so much in front of us to accomplish and do that's going to be so rewarding in life because it's being done God's way, too—that's the joy of it, too— with God's Family, people who think the same in the sense of a way of life. No jealousy, no envy, no drama. It's hard for us to grasp that. It really is. No drama. Ready for that one! You look at TV anymore, and the news, it's like that's all there is in the world right now. It's getting so stirred up out there.

“Eat bread without scarcity.” With ever-growing more and more, bread, the bread of life that God gives to us. I think of how God has blessed us to grow and we were given more at this time after 6,000 years, and we're just scratching the surface. We really are.

...in which you will lack nothing. A land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. Have plenty. There's so much there.

When you have eaten and are full... Think about Laodicea. Well, look what God let happen to the Church. He let them eat spiritually, greater than they ever have. Greater than Ephesus and all the other Church eras before it.

When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless or thank the Eternal your God for the good land which He has given you. Beware... Beware that you do not forget the Eternal, your God. He's where all these things come from. To understand what God gives us, to embrace that, to be thankful for that, to be thankful because it's real to us. And He says, “Beware,” because this is the tendency of human nature, and most have gone this course.

Beware that you do not forget the Eternal, your God, by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes, which I command you today. So all the truth that God has given to us, sometimes it's just hard for us as human beings to grasp how much, how great, how awesome that really is. The world doesn't have it. Scattered churches don't have it. They've lost most of what they even had before. Why? Because God's spirit isn't there. It has to be alive and active.

...His judgments and His statutes, which I command you today, or otherwise when you have eaten and are full... Do we ever get full to the point where we don't need more, to where we don't want more? That can happen to the human mind. It happened during Laodicea. We didn't realize how much we didn't know. We didn't realize how much we didn't grasp. We didn't realize how much we were really lacking. We were just beginning our growth. There's so much more.

...or otherwise, when you have eaten and are full and have built beautiful houses and dwell there... So, what are we building? Because the places we're dwelling in it's becoming more beautiful into a time when finally it's going to be spirit and of a kind of beauty that is so incredible. To be spirit, to have the kind of mind we're going to have, never having ever again anything like carnal human nature in us. Now, that's freedom. That's being delivered from Egypt. That's what it's about.

...otherwise, when you have eaten and are full and have built beautiful houses and dwelt there, and your herds and your flocks multiply... In other words, your wealth has increased. That's what this is about. There's no end to it. This solar system, the Milky Way, and beyond – no end to it. We can't grasp all that. What we're going to be doing, all that's out there, the fullness of life that's going to be, and sharing that with God's Family?

...and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have multiplied, that your heart becomes lifted up. That's exactly what happened to Lucifer. Isn't that crazy? His heart became lifted up because of all that he had because of all that he was given. He began to look on that more and want more. He wasn't satisfied with what God had given. And so, for us in physical carnal life, in the process of our calling, these are the things we have to address.

"That your heart becomes lifted up." I don't know about you, you've seen people and their hearts been lifted up in the Church. They think they're something, think they're important, begin to treat others in a bad way because they're so important because they see themselves as being important, as having an important job, having an important position. "Do you see me?" You know, that's just carnal human nature.

I've seen it over and over again throughout the Churches, every Church I've ever been in, because that's just carnal human nature. That's the way we are as human beings. We begin to be lifted up. And some don't even need much help in the sense of having some responsibility or whatever.

I've given the example of the people fighting about who's going to bring the cookies. You know, you think, well, that's something really to get upset at others about in the Church, isn't it? Who's going to bring the cookies? Be a shame if they're forgotten one Sabbath. Be a shame if we didn't have them. The Church might fall apart. Anyway, I'm sorry. But that's when pride enters in, and people begin to see themselves in their job. And it's so important, it's like, "How can we live without this, if people don't see me bringing in the cookies?"

...that your heart becomes lifted up, and you forget the Eternal, your God. Because that's what vanity does. That's what pride does. It turns people away from it. It turns the mind away from God, from really focusing on God and seeing that everything we have that's good and right comes from God.

...who brought you out of the land of Egypt... Out of sin, freeing us, wanting us to come out of it, wanting us to get control of self. **...from the house of bondage.** You know, I think of all the people who have ever left, they've gone right back into bondage. Think they're free. No, you're not free from God. Jonah was never free from God in that respect.

...who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions, and a thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; who fed you in the wilderness with manna. We read this on a physical plane, but the same things have happened spiritually on a spiritual plane in God's Church. The exact same things. The carnal human nature and the response into all the things God was doing as He's been leading us out, out of the bondage of spiritual Egypt. We go through these battles, and they're all in the mind and how we deal with them.

“Who fed you in the wilderness with manna.” And we have the bread of life constantly before us. What value do we place on that? Awesome.

...which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might try you. So we go through a lot of things, and we have to learn humility. We have to learn what it's like when we experience pride. Because every one of us, we have pride in our life. There is pride in your mind in your life that you don't even know about yet because we're always being refined. There's always a measure of it because it's carnal human nature. “The lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” It's always in your mind. You're never going to get rid of it until you're spirit.

And so, you're always having to deal with that. But it becomes, hopefully and prayerfully, as we grow, then, more and more refined. More of that is gotten rid of, and we're in greater control. That's the goal.

“And that He might humble you, and that He might try you.” In other words, to go through the fire. We go through the fire from time to time and see where we are. Because of going through it, we can actually learn from that.

...to do you good in the end. Then you say in your heart, My power and the might of my hand has gained me this wealth. I've known so many in that position. People begin to think they did this, they came to understand certain things, they see certain things. And it's like slap me back out of my stupidity! And anyway, human nature is an ugly thing.

Verse 18—Now, you shall remember the Eternal, your God. We're never to forget. Jonah tried to run away. He wanted to forget. All it took was a big old fish to remind him. Then he says, “And then I remembered.” You better believe it.

Now, you shall remember the Eternal, your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth. It's about that which is spiritual. What do we value the most in life, in this physical life? Everything physically, physical, in that respect, is just a means to an end. The goal is everything that is spiritual. Truly.

And that He may establish His covenant which He gave oath to your fathers as it is this day. So, I read that, and I can't help but think of all the sermons we've gone through recently about the oath and how we enter into it with God at baptism, our word, and what it means.

Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the Eternal your God and follow other gods... That means to turn away. Because as soon as we start turning away, we're following something else. And generally, it's self – our own wants, our own desires that are not of God – and make that wrong choice then to follow how we think.

...and serve them and worship them. I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. So, somewhere there has to be repentance in life. And for many, it's going to be in the Great White Throne, if it's possible.

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. So, what is so bad in God's Church, in God's way of life, that someone wouldn't always want to continue to practice and live what we started with from the beginning? Incredible.

Again, when he said here, **Jonah 2:7—When my life faded within me, I remembered the Eternal and my prayer went up to You into Your holy temple.**

Verse 8—Those who observe empty vanity... or live or do that which is empty. In other words, relying on self, that's empty vanity. ...**forsake.** So that's what we've just talked about. Forsake, or as the word is, "to lose mercy." That means cut ourselves off from God. We aren't able to receive God's grace any longer. That's what happens. We don't receive God's favor anymore. And so, this is what it's saying. That's what we forsake by wrong choices. That's what we turn from. That's what we run away from.

But I will sacrifice to You. Easy to say if you're in a great fish and one day goes by, and two days go by, and you're getting weaker and weaker, and you're feeling pretty bad. Your whole body's hurting. Your skin hurts. Your body aches. You've been fighting for air. And we can't really comprehend all that, what he went through. But it's a whole lot easier then to say, "I will sacrifice to You."

Because the reality is, he didn't do really well in some of the things he first did after he was vomited back out. He had to learn some more lessons, and evidently did, because of how this is written and what is written here. But sometimes it's amazing what we have to go through as human beings to crack through the hardness of heart that we have as human beings, the stubbornness of the human spirit, the resistance that's there in the human mind to resist God. Because it says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." And that's our battle, the human mind. Now, what an incredible thing.

So, we have to strive to pray and to ask for help to make the right choices that are in agreement with God, and not to resist God. Because our natural inclination is we tend to resist. And then sometimes in the resistance, we begin to ignore and not really see ourselves for what we really are because we're not really looking for it, for that help, to fight.

But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving. Now, that's the way it should always be. Always with thanksgiving to God for everything we have. Every day of our life, we should be thankful to God. Incredible. Not just about eating three meals a day and thanking God, that the world does as a whole, and that's the main thing that comes into the human mind.

We should go far above and beyond that in knowing what we have and what we've been given, and thankful for the incredible calling we have, of where we're going, and what we can conquer and overcome. It's about a relationship with God. And to be thankful every day in that respect on a spiritual plane.

...with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. So, he entered into an oath with God, which is what everybody does when they begin a journey after being called by God. He had certain battles he had to go through, and God worked with him in that.

And within the Church, we have to think about and remember the oath we made at baptism. Incredible. Because it's easy to go through that and go under the water and come back up again. But it's not easy what follows. It's a battle. It's a fight. It's a fight against this mind to bring it into subjection to God. Awesome! God gives us the ability to do that.

I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Eternal. Is that what we want? Is that what we chose, to be in God's Family, and we treasure that, we recognize how incredible that is? And nothing is more important. Nothing in this physical life, and no one and nothing is more important than attaining to what God offers us, to be in His spirit Family, Elohim. It's the greatest thing that God has ever given, the greatest thing that God can accomplish in the sense of a creation. Awesome!

And there's a lot of work that's gone into that, a lot of work far above and beyond what we can really comprehend. A part of it we're reading about today, so that we can read stories like this and realize these things were all planned out. They didn't happen as it just came along. "Oh, there's Jonah, and there's Nineveh, and who am I going to send? Jonah, and send him up to Nineveh, that great city." We're going to get into some of that stuff later here. And "Uh-oh, what's he doing? He's heading to Tarshish?! Hmm. We'll have him swallowed by a fish." But to know that was planned.

Do we grasp how awesome God is in planning things? The book, words that we can read, the Bible, the accounts of things that happened through history. Things like Esther, they didn't just happen; they were planned long, long, long time ago. Everything for a purpose because it all fits into what God is building. We should be so in awe of those things!

What was I reading the other day here about certain stories here? And even in the world, some of these things, like Jonah here, "It's a story. It's like a children's story." You know it's a nice story, but it really happened? We're going to be reading some of that in the future sermon here, it just hit me, and some of their ideas and thoughts about Jonah and what he lived through, and when he might have lived, and some of that garbage that's out there. And it's like, not really believed when it comes right down to it as a whole.

But we believe it. Incredible, incredible things that are here. Awesome! We're so blessed. We really are.

Salvation is of the Eternal. It comes from God. That's what He's offered us, to have something greater than this carnal, physical, temporary life. It doesn't last a long time. When you're young, you think it's going to last a long time. And then you get up around my age, and you realize it doesn't last very long, it's almost over. It is what it is. It's part of God's design. It's awesome.

The Eternal spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah onto dry land or onto the land. Incredible. I don't even know how that fully happened. Can a big old fish get up far enough that it can spew you out? I guess... But he says it was on dry land. So, I don't know. But I believe it.

But to understand what happened exactly after three days and three nights, that amount of time, exactly as a part of God's plan, and this is when Jonah is spewed out on the ground. And what was left there? Well, that's next Sabbath.