

Elohim or Nothing

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Welcome, brethren, to this seventh-day Sabbath.

It's difficult for mankind to comprehend that there are only two outcomes from their human existence. And by that, I mean that people really don't think about their existence. Most people believe in a heaven and a hell; therefore, they don't... Or not most, a lot do. So, no one really stops and thinks that the reality of it is that there are only two outcomes. One is Elohim, and the other one is absolutely nothing.

Generally, a human would spend very little time, if any, thinking about the end of their physical life. So, nobody really, when you're younger (which I've been, surprise, surprise), you don't really stop and think that it's going to come to an end. You're going to get old and just live life, and don't really stop and think about anything much at all. In fact, they only ever think about the end when it happens to them. As you get closer, once you get of a senior age, then people start to think. And even then, they think, "Hmm." You know, "What will happen?"

I know for a fact my father, who was an atheist really, didn't believe in anything (probably better off), and wasn't polluted by a lot of that. He didn't believe in anything. But near the end, when he was near death, he started to think, "Well, what happens now?" Because, when you don't believe in anything, it still affects you as a human, where you think, "Oh, well, maybe, who knows?"

Most of mankind believes there is some form of afterlife, and that life actually continues on. And when you look back at a lot of the periods of time around the pyramids, and that when monolithic things were built, huge stones were moved and all that (pre the flood), that a lot of that, people were looking at an afterlife. And therefore, they built monuments and things. And they found them even in China, where they found all those clay statues. Where the reality was that they thought they were going to take that on with them into the afterlife, and they took all these guards with them. And, you know, the pharaohs used to bury themselves and all their servants with them because they thought they were going to continue on in some form of afterlife.

So, many have believed in some form of afterlife. And of course, today's society, we will see that people still believe in some form of afterlife. You know, a sports event or something, someone will, at the end of the game or maybe even at a funeral or something, someone will say, "I know they're looking down on me," as if there's somebody there looking down, and that there's somebody there and there's someone up in heaven, so-called. No one ever says, "I know

someone's looking up at me," because most people don't believe that people go to hell, really. You know, at some point they'll... They have to be really bad to go to hell, so to speak.

And then, we understand that hell is a manmade concept. It's actually not real in any shape or form, and that it's certainly a manmade concept. And that's something new because previously this never existed, this Dante's Inferno, don't know, which came because of the thinking of a human. And it's not real, nor is going to heaven, of course. It's not real. But people believe in some form of afterlife.

Many others believe in going to heaven or hell or having some form of life continuation. But the truth is, and the truth has been provided by God Himself. God created everything that is physical in composition and everything spiritual, all that's made and created of spirit. God created it all.

The truth is, there are only two possible outcomes from having been created in a physical way, i.e. a human who has that potential of an afterlife. God's plan is to create a spirit family from physical mankind. That plan is simple. It's Elohim or nothing. Pretty straightforward. That very thought or spiritual knowledge (because it is spiritual), which God has provided or revealed to His Church, should sober us, because we know the seriousness of this calling that we have. Because once we are called, we then have the potential to enter Elohim. Now, if we're not called, we haven't had that potential yet. We're human, but that's all. Life and death. Nothing. But we have the opportunity or the potential to be in Elohim, which is to live forever.

I want to read Truth 8. Now, there are a lot of truths that we could look at that cover aspects of this topic, but this one here really says it all, which is Truth 8:

8 (5) What is man? Man does not have an immortal soul.

Now, that is a direct statement. There is nothing within humans... Once we have a human existence, that's it, it's a human existence. And if fortunate, if blessed by God, that we are resurrected into a second life, a second physical life, we then have that potential, we will be given that potential to enter Elohim. But after that, what is there? Absolutely nothing. If we don't enter Elohim, there is nothing. Man doesn't understand that in any shape or form, but God's true Church does.

Man **is** a temporary living, mortal being that returns to the elements of the earth at death and does not go to heaven or hell. Only God can give mankind immortality in His Family.

And that's why the title of this sermon which is *Elohim or Nothing*, because they're the two possibilities from a human existence.

The truth is, the outcome of having been created a human by God, or having a human existence, depends on being called by God, which is the first key to all of this, being called, and then the

individual must make a free will choice to listen to what God states, believe it... Because some people will listen and not believe. The issue. ...and then choose to obey His word, which means we hear, and we believe.

Now, we understand that faith is living what we believe. So, we believe God, we then live it. Well, that's faith, living what we believe. The key to it, of course, is if we listen and then don't believe, there's an issue, there's an issue in our life. Now, the outcome of that non-belief is nothingness.

The choice is obedience or disobedience to the very word of God. Once called, that individual must actively fight their own selfishness in the mind until the end of their physical life. The key to life, physical life, is to believe God. Now, that in itself requires God's holy spirit, because a person can't actually believe God without the gift of God's holy spirit. It's not possible.

Because people today would say that they believe what God says, and of course, the word of God has been twisted and perverted by mankind. So, people read certain things and interpret it (because they don't have God's holy spirit), but they interpret it to fit what they already believe or what they've already been taught.

So, the key to life really is to believe God, to listen, to believe, then God will provide His holy spirit so that we can maintain that faith. Because the moment we decide that we no longer want to live it, believe it or live it, well, then there's an issue. God withdraws His holy spirit because we don't believe Him.

The vast majority will have to live twice so that God can give them the opportunity of spirit life in the Elohim Family. Now, that's the vast majority. Now, we understand there are 144,000 that have been called, they have listened to what God has said, and God has provided His holy spirit so they then can believe God. They believed God. Because God does the work. Man has a work to do, which is to continue in faith, to believe, and then implement it into our life, and to fight self.

There was something that happened during the Feast, which involved me, that at the time, I didn't really see what it was. But afterwards, after I came back from the Feast, God revealed to me an aspect of it that I hadn't really thought about, and it devastated me. It really shocked me that I had that potential and I had that stupidity after all these years in the Body of Christ to think that I would go down that path, but I did. And I realize now how devastating it was. I remember being quite devastated that I had that potential.

But it showed something to me, because God revealed it to me, that we all have that potential. It doesn't matter how long we're in the Body of Christ; it's easy to fall into sin through a little bit of neglect or just simple stupidity, which it all goes back to pride, of course.

So, the vast majority of mankind will be given the opportunity that we currently now have, which is to enter Elohim by our choice, that what we're living, because we listen to God, we believe God, and then we implement it. Now, there have been many a test in the Church of late where something has been given and people had a choice. They either understand government, or they don't. Now, if we don't understand true government, God's government in the Church in this world, well, it's going to be a problem in our life. Because things will be said which are not necessarily directly from the word of God, but a decision has to be made by the Church, and we have an apostle that makes a decision, and therefore, we implement it.

Now, this is the issue in our life, whether we implement it or not, or whether we're going to fight and resist because we don't fully understand government. God's government, we don't understand it. If we did, we would react straightaway and implement it into our life – trust God and what God is giving us to believe.

Spirit life in Elohim is based on God providing His holy spirit, then the personal choice of obedience to every word of God. So, that's the key to this matter: that once called, we listen to what God has to say, and then we implement it into our life. And that's about obedience.

If a person chooses disobedience to the word of God, they face darkness forever, which means no consciousness. Now, this is an aspect of life that we often don't sit back and think about. But we've been called now, so there are two choices: Elohim or nothing. We may live on for a while and... But if... Depends what we, what decisions we make, whether it's going to be Elohim or nothing.

But that nothingness, within the human mind, it thinks there's a level of consciousness or something after. There isn't. There's nothing. So, it's darkness and blackness forever. And not as if a person says, "Oh, it's dark," and consciously thinks about it. No, there's just nothing at all. It's like going to sleep, and that's it. It's darkness forever. No awareness of ever having lived. No awareness of ever having lived.

A personal choice of obedience will lead to someone being changed to spirit—this is the potential—and given spirit life in Elohim, in the God Family. If a person makes a personal choice of disobedience, it will lead them to being destroyed, never having any future consciousness.

Now, it's something that mankind just doesn't think of, doesn't even contemplate in any shape or form. But we're in this position now where this is a reality for us because we have been called, and therefore, it's Elohim or nothing.

Revelation 20:7. We've been through this during the Feast period. We're just going to go over it again. **Now, when the thousand years have expired** (or been fulfilled), **Satan will be released from his prison for a short season, a little while, and will go out to deceive.** Now, this aspect of

“going out to deceive,” because there's a period where that deception, we've had 6,000, almost 6,000 years of that deception, where people are deceived. And of course, heaven/hell is a deception. And there are many other things in this society where deception is taking over.

This business about having... You know, it's very straightforward what God says. It's Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve. It's a matter of there are two sexes, male and female. And we understand why God made a male and why God made a female, as a support. It's very straightforward. God's word is very straightforward about what it's about.

So, it's a deception to think that somebody then could go out and change what God has created. No, it's whatever we are at the time, if our thinking is a particular way, we have to fight that thinking. So, it's no different than a man having to fight the thoughts that will come into his mind towards a female. And vice versa, a female has to fight the thoughts. Well, if somebody is drawn to a male or someone is drawn to a female, female to female, male to male, they have to fight that thinking. And that's the issue of life. It's about fighting the thinking. It's not about, oh, well, give in to it and just go your merry way, so to speak.

So, Satan will go out to deceive once again. And we've had 6,000 years, almost 6,000 years of this deception, and it's rampant at the moment. Mankind is deceived in many, many ways. There are many things that God has given and is giving at the moment when it comes to technology, but man will always use it towards self. He will always be selfish with it; therefore, it'll be used for evil, more evil than it will be for good. But it could be used for good, but it's being used for evil.

So, once again, we see Satan has been bound for this thousand-year period (a little bit more than that), but he is bound. And that binding is the fact that he's no longer able to go out and deceive. Because mankind is deceived. And currently, the world is totally deceived about a lot of things, particularly about God.

So, Satan's motive and intent is one of deception. That's what he wants to do. That's what he tries to do, because he wants to destroy God's plan. So, everything, his motive, is about destruction and destroying God's plan, which is the potential we have. God wants to give it. Satan wants to take it from us. He wants to destroy us. So, he's going to go out and deceive once again, which is his motive and intent is about deceiving.

...the nations, which are in the four corners of the earth. So, it's over the whole earth. **...Gog and Magog.** Now, we understand on spiritual plane, it's a mindset that people want to reject God or they will reject God. **...to gather them together to battle.** So, that's a big deception.

To think that we as weak, pathetic humans, could go up to fight against Yahweh Elohim? Now, that's what you call deception! That is absolute... It's insanity to think that we could resist the

Great Creator God. That is just absolute insanity. But that's our potential, is to be deceived, to think that we could resist what God is saying. That's our potential, and that's what we often do is resist God and fight against God, the creator of the universe.

So, we see a large percentage of mankind will gather together with this deception, **whose number is the sand of the sea**. So, there are millions of people. There's a large percentage of people here involved. Now, we understand that they have been resurrected from the first period of 6,000 years, and then there's another thousand where some will have died and potentially be resurrected again. And they're living in that hundred-year period, where God is now pouring out incredible knowledge and the power of His holy spirit is available. But this is a choice.

I remember back at a particular time when I was working in the world's system, that someone once said to me (after being at work at some time; this is going back twenty-odd years or so), that they didn't want to be anything like me, and they would rather die than be like me – Sabbath keeper, Holy Day keeper, and just other things.

But basically, the thought process was they never, ever would, and they didn't want to choose it. And I struggled for a while to understand how someone could make that statement. But now I understand more the fact that the natural mind can get set on something that it really wants, and it just rejects God's way and God's thinking. It just doesn't want anything to do with it, and they would rather die than be like this. They would rather die and rather have nothing. They'd rather fulfill the desire of the flesh and the pleasure of sin for that temporary period of their life. But that's a free will choice.

But then I thought after a while, and over the years I've thought about it, and I've come to realize that yes, that's the potential of the natural carnal mind, which is one that can think that it doesn't want anything to do with God's way, and it would rather enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short period of time (“the temporary pleasure of sin” it's called), but would rather receive that than to live in Elohim. Rather have nothing. Elohim or nothing. They choose the nothing.

Well, there's a large percentage here of the earth, that during this period of the hundred years, at the end of it, when Satan has been released to deceive once again, that people are deceived into thinking that that is a better pleasure—the temporary pleasure of life—than the pleasure of being in Elohim forever, and having the mind of God and never being able to sin.

It's sometimes hard to imagine, but yes, the human mind can do that, and the human mind can think that way.

They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints, the beloved City, which is spiritual Jerusalem, and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured

them. So, fire is used here to destroy. And we're going to look at different examples of when fire was actually used to destroy, because God's used it more than once.

Verse 10—The devil, who deceived them at a certain place, being the beast and false prophet, and being at that time tormented.

So, we drop down to **verse 14—Then death and grave were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** The second death for mankind happens because of a free will choice that people have made, because they enjoy the deception. They fall into that deception and are deceived. Now, this deception can take place now because Satan is loose and he is out to destroy the potential within a human. He is not overly worried about mankind. He's worried about... He's not worried, but his focus is on the potential that we have, the Body of Christ.

Verse 15—And everyone not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Now, this is the gehenna fire.) **to be destroyed.** It is an eternal punishment, not an eternal punishing. And that's important because it's not like Dante's fire. Where when a person is destroyed and is cast into this lake of fire, which simply is God pouring out fire to destroy, and that's it, no life ever, ever, ever again, no consciousness ever again. It's finished. The only thing that's going to exist is Elohim (and the angels that have supported Elohim), Elohim, the Elohim Family, a spirit being that has supported God, Yahweh Elohim. And outside of that, there is going to be nothing that has a consciousness that has the potential to ever enter Elohim. So, our decision, brethren, is Elohim or nothing.

Once called by God, each individual must choose between Elohim or nothing. So, that's the title of the sermon, really. It says everything. It's simply Elohim or nothing. Now, we have the potential now to make this choice. Elohim or nothing. Mankind hasn't had that choice yet.

The purpose of this sermon is to highlight the fact that once a person has been called by God, that person has a choice to make: obedience or disobedience to the very word of God. And that's as simple as it is. It's just a choice that has to be made. And at times, we will slip, we will make errors. But God, through His mercy, has provided us the gift of repentance.

So, it starts, of course, with Passover, that potential. Christ died to cover our sins. And the potential then for God to live and dwell in us. And that's our life, is a continual state of repenting when we see sin, or when God reveals sin. Because we actually can't see sin unless God reveals it. We might think, "Oh, yes, I can..." Well, you have to be called. You have to have the power of God's holy spirit to see the difference between God and our thinking. And when we do, we can see then, "Oh yeah, it's time to repent and it's time to move forward and strive not to make that same error again." Not to be against God that way again. Not take things to self again. Not have "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," those three main categories, to understand them all, to look at them and look at our intent.

This choice really is life or death. That's really the choice that we're in. We are either going to choose life, and if we do, we're going to strive to fight and overcome self. Or we're going to choose death, which is don't do anything, don't fight, don't strive to overcome. The choice is between good and evil as outlined by God Himself.

Deuteronomy 30:11. This choice is between life, Elohim, or death, nothing. **For this commandment, which I** (it's Moses speaking), **command you today, is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven that you should say** (talking about physical here), **Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?** So, that's just another excuse, saying, "Oh, look, it's all too far away" you know, "and we don't understand it." Well, they couldn't, of course, but we can. **Nor is it beyond the sea.** So, it is actually within our reach because it's given to us often each Sabbath. We can take an aspect of that and think about it and put it into our life.

Often, things may be repeated, and we go, "It's been repeated." But that's not the issue. The issue is, well, maybe it's meant to be repeated. Because Mr. Armstrong used to repeat things often. Well, it burns in. We have Atonement every year. Similar things are said. We have Passover. The same type of service. Well, there's a reason why. Because we, as humans, are pathetic and forget. We forget the importance of many of these things.

So, Moses is actually saying to Israel, who really couldn't comprehend the spiritual aspect of it, "What God's word is, here it is. You don't have to go anywhere for it. It's here being provided for you. All you have to do is listen, believe it, and live it."

Nor is it beyond the sea that you should say, Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it? Well, same for us, brethren. We don't have to go anywhere. God has called us, He's placed us in the Body of Christ, the Church, and He provides us every Sabbath and every Holy Day direction in what we should do. Listen, implement, and live it. It's not hard, really. Listen. Believe it. Implement it.

But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart that you may do it. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. Which is really the summary of this sermon. That's what it is. It's spiritual in nature. For those called, it's about life and good. So, what our future is, and our future potential is, to be in Elohim, that we're going to have life forever. None of this nothing business. It's life forever in things that we can't even imagine.

It's similar to trying to think that God has existed forever and has always been, and our minds always go, "Well, what did He do before that?" Well, there's no just before that because God has always existed. We're the ones who are temporary. So, we have the potential to live forever after this point. It's an incredible potential that we have.

Verse 16—In that I command you today to love the Lord your God. Now, this is ... Often, we just think of it as just words. But “to love the Lord your God.” If we really love something, we sacrifice for it. And that's what's required of us. If we really love God, we will sacrifice ourselves, what we desire, and put what God desires first. Otherwise, we're not putting God first in our life.

...to walk in His ways. That's one thing. Walking in God's ways, keeping Sabbath, tithing, loving the brethren, keeping the Holy Days, sacrificing self for the benefit of others. That's how we walk in His way.

...and keep His commandments. The instructions that are given. It's not just the ten commandments, it's all of the commandments, i.e. the things that underpin. We can often look at one commandment, and it says, for example, "Don't commit adultery." Well, it's so detailed because it all goes back to the mind. It goes back to not just a physical act of committing adultery, it goes back to a thought process and a mind. And there are many aspects of adultery that we often wouldn't think of when we are physical without God's holy spirit. We just think it's adultery. Well, there's a lot more to it than that. And of course, it takes in things like pornography, etcetera, etcetera.

...keep His commandments, His instructions, His statutes, and His judgments. All the things that God has laid before us in His word that we now can comprehend and understand, we should put those first and think about them and choose them.

...that you may live and multiply. Of course, this is talking about physical. But for us, it's that we may live. If we do these things, God says that we may live. We will live in Elohim.

...and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. Well, this is physical. For us, what are we going to possess? What God has created for us. Amazing things that our minds can't fully comprehend. But it's going to be amazing, the things that God has created.

So, we have to live a life of obedience to the spirit of the law. The spirit of the law is something that people in the world haven't... well, little comprehension of. They look for intent. In crime shows that you watch. They'll say, "Well, why did he do it?" Well, selfishness is the answer. But, they look for some level of motive, and if they can get a motive or a why in the ... It's easier for them. They believe that they can then convict them because they can show intent.

Well, that's our life, looking at our intent. We've looked at aspects of it before where someone can be generous. What's their motive? Not our job to judge other people's motives; it's to judge our own motives, to look at why we do the things that we do. And when we look deep enough, we will always see that it's about self. It's either self-gratification, self-glory, self-praise, but it's about self. That's often our motive. And even in the Body of Christ, these things happen where

our motive is not necessarily the correct motive. It's not done motivated by the love of God, which is sacrificing.

Verse 17—But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear... Well, that's the beginning of it, not listening. So, there's something that is given by God to His people. Our first part is to hear what is given. **...and are drawn away.** So, we don't hear. We hear it, maybe, and we go, "Well, I'm not going to implement it." Well, that means we're drawn away by our own selfishness, where we should be striving to implement it.

So, we could be drawn away by something physical, so we won't hear what God says. God says, "Don't do this," or "Maybe you should do that." And we think, "Oh no, I'm going to do something different." Well, we're drawn away. We're drawn away by our own thinking. We're **drawn away and worship other gods.** Well, who's the other god really? Self. The other god really is self. We're putting self first. We're pleasing self **...and serve them.** You know, we serve our self. Self-serving.

Verse 18—I announce to you today that you shall surely perish, and you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in to possess. Now, this is physical. We understand, take the spiritual component, that God is saying, "We won't enter Elohim, and we will perish. We will have a death." It's called the second death. We will perish.

I call heaven and earth as witness today against you that I have set before you life and death. Elohim or nothing. **...blessing and cursing, and therefore, choose life.** God saying, "Choose life. Make the right choice." God wants to give us life in Elohim, but we are the biggest problem. Ourselves.

...blessing and cursing, and therefore, choose life that both you and your descendants may live. That you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and length of days, and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give them.

We understand that that is physical and ours is spiritual, and that God will give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob something that we desire. We wish to have Elohim. We wish to have life. So, we have been called to receive that spiritual gift that God is willing to give, and that's what a calling's about. It's about making a choice.

Now, fire, we have said before, fire to destroy has been used by God as an example to mankind. Fire brings nothingness. We're going to look at the story of Lot, because this was an example that has been given by God to His Church, that we are in a battle against self.

Genesis 13:12—Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tents near or even as far as Sodom. Now, I've watched different archaeological programs that have been trying to identify the various cities. And it's interesting out of the many

programs that are available, that there are a lot that are trying to prove the Bible wrong. Others set out (generally on a religious basis) to prove the Bible right.

And I managed to come across one who was an archeologist who just simply wanted to have a look to see the accuracy of things, which is a different motive, different intent. So, he actually found where the plains were, where the cities were, which there were five cities there, and he actually found Zoar, which had been renamed. But he actually found it, and then he looked at to see where Sodom and Gomorrah were. So, those plains, when we look at it here, were in a different condition than what they are today.

Verse 13—But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Eternal. So, here we see that mankind had gone so far where it's just open slather, and there was a particular type of sin that was more prevalent in the society.

Genesis 18:32. Now, this is the story when God appeared to Abraham in the form of a man, and there were two angels with Him in the form of men. So, there were three, and the two are going to go on down to Sodom (which are the two angels), and what we're going to see now is that God is talking with Abraham, and Abraham has asked Him a series of questions about, "Don't destroy them if You found so many people there," etcetera.

We'll pick it up in verse 32. **Genesis 18:32—Then he, Abram, said, Let not the Eternal be angry, and I will speak but once more.** Ask it again. **Suppose there are ten who are found there?** There are ten righteous. "What about if there's ten?" Because he'd started off at a higher number, and he's worked his way down. **And He said,** God said, **I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.** God knew there wasn't ten there. There weren't ten righteous at all.

Verse 33—So, the Eternal went His way as soon as He had finished speaking to Abram, and Abraham returned to his place.

Genesis 19:1—Now, the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom, which is the entrance to the city. Looking at some of these programs, you see that the city had an entrance, and there used to be various, in the time of judges, the judges would sit in these various places, and as people came in, they were able to talk to these people.

Well, here we have Lot sitting at the entrance. Well, there's a reason why he's sitting at the entrance. Because he knew the depravity that was going on there, and therefore, he would sit there. And here he sees these two men coming down, which is at the entrance of this city.

When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed himself with the face towards the ground. He said, Here now, my lords, please turn into your servant's house and spend the night, wash your feet, then you may rise early and go your way. So, what's Lot's motive? Lot is trying to protect them because he knows the evilness of that city, and he knows that if they go

into the city, what's going to be, or what they're going to face. So, he's actually protecting them or trying to protect them, because his motive is one of protecting so that they don't get harmed in the way that he knows.

And they said, No, but we will spend the night in the open square. Well, this would be quite horrifying because Lot at this point doesn't realize who they really are, and of course, they've been sent there to take Lot and his family out, and then the city will be destroyed by God. But they say, "No, we'll now stay in the square." Now, he'd be horrified when he heard that.

But he insisted strongly, which is vehemently because he knew, **so that they turn into him and entered his house, and he made them a feast, or a banquet, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.**

Verse 4—Now, before they lay down at night, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, **both old and young, all the people from every quarter** (there were a lot of people there), **surrounded the house, and they called to Lot and said to him, Where are the men who came to you tonight?** So, it's a pretty direct statement. You know, "Where are they?" They wanted them, of course. **Bring them out that we may know them.** Now, this is not, "Hi, how are you going?" This is to know them, which that term is referred to really as an expression of a sexual activity.

Now, the word "Sodom" actually means "burning." That's the actual name of it. Now, originally, the term sodomy came from this Sodom and Gomorrah. Because prior to that, it wasn't the fact that that act was called sodomy. This is a term that's been used later on because of what the behavior of the city was, was Sodom, sodomy. So, it wasn't in those days something that was known as that word. It was something different.

We would say today, you know, they carnally knew them maybe, whereas now they say it's... Well, it's still the same, but in those days, they wouldn't use the word sodomy. We would use the word sodomy or Sodom.

Verse 6—So, Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, which was clever, **and said, Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly. See, now, I have two daughters who have not known men. Please, let me bring them out to you that you may know them or that you may do to them as you wish. Only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason.** Now, this is a protection. And he knew that the men weren't interested in the women at all. Now, why would they? That wasn't their proclivity. That's not what they had in their mind.

They have come under my roof. So, he's saying, "Well, they're here. Yes, they're here, but you know, they're under my roof. You have no right to be here requesting this. **And they said, Stand back.** And then they said, **This one, Lot, came to the city here, and he keeps acting as a judge.** So, now they're turning on him by saying, "Well, you know, you're saying that; it's got nothing to

do with you. You, you're acting as a judge, judging us. Who do you think you are? You're a guest here, and here you are telling us what to do." No different than today. People would act the same.

Now, we will deal with you, then with them. So, they pressed hard against the man, Lot, and they came near to break down the door.

Verse 10—But the men, which are the angels, reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them and shut the door. And they struck the men who were in the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door. So, now they're in a state of confusion. They're trying to find their way around. They're actually not sure where it is anymore. But, of course, it was there, nothing had changed, but their minds were confused so that they couldn't find it.

Verse 12—Then the men said to Lot, Have you anyone else here, son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, whom you have in the city? Take them out of this place. So, this is an opportunity that's been extended to Lot and Lot's extended family, that if he was to go to them now and tell them, he could take them out. They could all flee at the same time.

For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Eternal, and the Eternal has sent us to destroy it. So, that's a direct statement. So, Lot now knows what's really going on. He can see that this is serious, and it's time to get out.

So, Lot went out and spoke to his son-in-law, who had married his daughters and said, Get up, get out of this place, for the Eternal will destroy the city. But to his son-in-law, he seemed to be joking. In some ways, you can understand this, that people won't believe something as serious as this. And it's no different than today, that if we were to go to somebody and say, "It's time to do this or to do that," the natural carnal mind is going to think, "You're a mob of nutcases. Why would you... You know, you're joking, aren't you? We're not going to do anything." And nobody's going to do anything about it. People are just going to take it as it is. "It's not going to be destroyed. Who says this is all going to happen?"

Verse 15—When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city. So, here we see God is now going to use fire to destroy. And that's what this sermon's about because it is Elohim or nothing in the end.

And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Eternal being merciful to them, and brought them out and set them outside the city. Because the city's going to be destroyed, and he was holding back a little bit.

There are lessons in that for us too, brethren, where we've got to be very careful that we're not holding onto things of our past that we think, "Oh, well," you know, and linger. There's no lingering in sin. It's time to get out. And the only way out is to repent.

So, it came to pass when they had brought them outside, that he said, Escape for your life.

That's us. Repentance is escaping for our life, our life in Elohim. Ongoing repentance; it's what's required.

Do not look behind you (don't go back), **nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed. Then Lot said, Please, no, my lords. Indeed, now, your servant has found favor in your sight and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life, but I will not escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtakes me and I die.** He's not going to be able to make it. He's left it quite late, so he's got to go somewhere closer. And he didn't want to go right through that area because there were obviously issues in those mountains with regard to bandits, etcetera, so he wanted to make sure that he made it out, but he didn't want to go right to the mountains because it was dangerous.

See, now, this city is near enough to flee to. (Is it not a little one?) Please let me escape there.

(Is it not a little one?) In brackets, a question mark. **And my life shall live. And he said to me, See, I have favored you concerning this thing, in that I will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken.** Now, that was Zoar. I think that's how you pronounce it. And it still exists today. And yet the other cities around it, when you look at it, they are just actually brimstone or ash, like a sulphur. And they found it, and it's quite incredible, but it's barren and it's desolate. There's nothing there.

Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there. Therefore, the name of the city is called Zoar. So, we see that God can protect and will protect His people. That's something we can take from that: that God will protect His people. And as long as we're doing the right thing and listening to God, living what we believe, God says He will protect us. And He can do anything.

Genesis 19:23—The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. And you pronounce it "Zo-har," "Zo-er"; different ways to pronounce it (and you can look that up).

Verse 24—Then the Eternal rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah from the Eternal out of the heavens. So, He (God) overthrew those cities, all of the plains, all of the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. So, what you see now, you can look up programs, and you can see its basically sulphur, brimstone. But everything's like a sulphur, and you can pick it up. It's like balls of sulphur. And it's quite incredible. You can see some of the entrances to buildings, and there being the... But there's absolutely nothing there. It's just like an

absolutely barren sulphur place, and the whole area. And yet that one city where Lot went is still there today.

God has clearly warned mankind of the penalty that is going to be paid for unrepented sin. So, this was an example. Sodom and Gomorrah was an example. It's a sin, as evil as it is. But sin is sin. We don't see it, but anything that goes against what God says is a sin if we go against it.

2 Peter 2:4—For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to an abyss. Now, that word there is “tártaros,” and it's not “gehenna,” so it's not “the time of destruction,” but it's “a place of restraint.” And we understand that Satan is currently held, and being allowed to do some damage through deception, but there's coming a time when Christ returns that he will actually be held and bound for a thousand years. Then we've got a period of a hundred years. And then at the end of that, he will then be released. So, this is tartaros.

And delivered them into the chains of darkness. So, this is an area where they're held, and they're awaiting the execution of judgment. **...to be reserved to judgment.** So, they're reserved, Satan and his demons are reserved, and as much as they're free at the moment, there's coming a period where they'll be held, and then they'll be released for a short time. And then there is the execution of judgment at the end of 7,100 years. Now, that's when there's Elohim or nothing.

Verse 5—And did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, through the flood. We understand that that there were eight that were on that ark. That God then saved what He desired, someone He considered and had counted as righteous, who believed Him and that would follow His ways. And the others, of course, we understand that man went on, and they built the Tower of Babel, and their languages were confused. And we can see how things have developed in mankind, that mankind with this mind will just lead to sin, and it'll just get worse and worse and worse. The longer it goes, the worse it'll get.

...and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of the eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly. So, God destroyed. Well, God's going to use fire soon again to destroy.

And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemning them to destruction. And that's what it's about. It's about this final destruction. **Making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.**

So, once called, we have a choice, and that choice is really quite straightforward. But it's much more complicated, of course, and a lot more difficult because of the nature we have. We can set out and choose to obey God, but we will always make sin, and we will live sin, we will do sin,

sometimes unknowingly, other times knowingly, and then... Because of the nature we have. So, we have been called to live godly, which is to obey every word of God.

And delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked. Now, this is when you can see certain things. And sometimes listening to programs on TV, you've got to turn it off. You can't cope anymore. It's just so distressful where people are heading, and how evil this world really is.

Verse 8—For that righteous man dwelling among them tormented his righteous life from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds. And it is frustrating. And it's you feel sorry for a lot of the young people, because they have no idea really what's going on. And the education system's breaking down.

There are current laws in Australia—I think it's probably basically worldwide—where you can be fined for smacking your child. So, the “sparing the rod spoils the child” principle, because it's not just about smacking, it's about discipline, will spoil the child. Well, now we've got youth crime, and it's like anarchy. You know, the other day there was somebody that had been released on bail for the fifty-seventh time. Fifty-seventh time!

I just think that you have to live in this world, and you look at it, and you think, "The kids are not going to have a hope, really," because there's no discipline. There's no correction. The correction that is given is often wrong motive behind that correction, because it doesn't suit the parents, so they lash out in anger rather than discipline because it's the word of God. Because they don't refer to the word of God.

There are often programs on the radio that we listen to to find out what's really going on, and without listening to it, we wouldn't know what was going on. But you listen to it, and you think, "It's just so frustrating you can't listen to it anymore," because some of the people ring up, it's just insanity. You think it's just absolute insanity. It's how can you think like that? But that's the time we live in. As in the days of Noah. It's, you know, people are just... God doesn't come into the picture.

You could solve a lot of the problems. Often I have the urge—I've never done it—had the urge and I think I'd ring up and say, "Listen, you know, God made it very clear what you're supposed to do with a child that won't listen to its parents." Like, this isn't, all of this isn't hard, this. And they ban all these things. "You're not allowed to do this. You're not allowed to do that." But it affects the people who are doing the right thing.

The people who are doing the wrong thing? So, you're not allowed to have, now you're not allowed to have a machete, which is a cutting tool. But the criminals have not handed theirs in, but all the people who are doing the right thing have handed them in. "You're not allowed to

have a gun." All the criminals kept theirs, but all the people handed their guns in. It's just madness. Because they don't go to the cause of the problem, they go to the effect. They go to... It's just frustrating.

Verse 9—The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation. Which is test and trial. God knows how to use that test and trial for our spiritual benefit.

...to reserve the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment. So, the execution of judgment will take place at the end of 7,100 years, and it is going to be Elohim or nothing.

Verse 10—Especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lusts of their uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.

Verse 11—Whereas angels who are greater in power and might do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Eternal.

Jude 1:5—But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Eternal, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed those who did not believe. So, brethren, for us, it's the same principle, because this is a reminder, that Jude is saying, "Just remember what God did with Israel." Remember, twenty years and younger were allowed in and twenty years and over would be destroyed in the wilderness; they wouldn't enter the promised land.

Same principle applies to us. We are required to listen, believe, and implement. They're the things we are required to do. And when we err, make a mistake, sin, we are to repent. Repent means to think differently about it. And when we do, there is a forgiveness, and it's forgotten.

Difficult for us to comprehend the forgetting part. We can understand the forgiving, but the forgetting is difficult for us. Well, sometimes we remember things. And there are certain sins that I know I would prefer not to forget, because it helps; because I'd never want to do that again, and I want to keep it in my mind that I have that potential to do that or say that. You know, to sin, that's my potential. And by remembering that that's my capacity, and God's revealed that capacity to me, that I now don't want to do that ever again. And, hopefully, I don't.

Verse 6—And the angels who did not keep their proper domain but left their own abode, their habitation, He has reserved into everlasting chains, you know, confinement, under darkness for the judgment of that great day. So, we understand that last day, that God is going to allow Satan to be released with the demons, and they're going to gather together people who are hostile against God. They don't want God's way, they haven't chosen it, and they don't want to choose it. They've already set their mind. And their outcome is nothingness.

Verse 7—As Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, in a similar manner of these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality. Now, this is a choice. By choice. So, a person can be tested or tempted to do something, think, "Oh..." and start that process. Well, as we're longer in the Church, we know that we cut that process off very quickly. But if we let it linger, it'll lead to something. Well, this choice is that we choose to fight it. We choose to go against self.

...and gone after carnal flesh and has set forth as an example of suffering the justice of everlasting fire. So, this everlasting fire, it lasts until it burns out. And once it burnt out, like Sodom and Gomorrah, once it burnt out, it burnt out. So, it's about an eternal punishment. It's a punishment that will take place, not being eternally punished, which is Dante's Hell.

A freewill choice can lead to a spirit life in Elohim, or this choice that we make can lead to darkness forever, with no consciousness of ever having been in existence. So, that's the choice that we face.

I want to read Truth 7:

7 (4) Who and what is God? God is a Family into which we may be born. God's spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are begotten children of God.

Now, without God's spirit, we cannot see sin, we don't understand sin, we don't see it as sin, which is, sin is something that's going against God, transgression of the law. So, we don't see it until God's spirit dwells in us. And when God reveals sin to us, then we have the choice to be in a state of repentance and go, "Ah," and repent, truly repent. And to repent means to think differently, to change the way we think about a matter.

In the near future, people will have to make a choice on a spiritual level because, at the moment, they can't. We can; they can't.

Joshua 24:14—Now, therefore, fear the Eternal, serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt. Serve the Eternal. So, we're to put away our past, things that we did, because technically, if we look at it on a spiritual level, we were in Egypt, in captivity, in bondage, which is this world, and we've come out. And now we're to put it all away, and now turn and serve God, obey and listen to what God has got to say.

Verse 15—And if it seems evil to you to serve the Eternal, choose for yourselves. And that's what we're doing. Every single day, we have to choose for ourselves to do something.

...this day, whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river... Which is our past. We want to go back to that rubbish, to the

foolishness? They're not really gods at all; they're just false gods. They're just stupidity, thinking of mankind, made up in the minds of men.

...the gods of the Amorites in the land you once dwelled. Well, we've dwelt in Egypt, we've lived in it, and we gave into "the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." That was our life. Well, we've been called out of that. We're not to go back, we're not to look at that or even contemplate any aspect of that. We hate it. We don't want anything to do with it.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Eternal. I think that's just a beautiful scripture. I love that scripture. Because it's a choice: "As for me and my house, I will serve the Eternal." That's what we all should be saying. Doesn't matter what happens around us, it's what I'm going to do. I've chosen God, I want to go down that path, I want to be in Elohim. I don't want the nothing, I want to be in Elohim. Just like I hope all of you.

So, the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake the Eternal and serve other gods. This is great from a physical point of view. **For the Lord our God, He is who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight.**

Now, we often think about the physical signs of things, but there's an incredible sign (there's a couple actually) that God has given us, particularly at this time. The first one is the Apostasy, of course. We understand that. That's actually a sign of the return of Christ. It's now going to happen. We're in that time. That had to happen first, and then Christ can return. We don't know when, but that's what we're looking forward to.

But another sign is our calling. Because we are so different, brethren. You know, our calling should be obvious to us. We can see this is an incredible sign that we now think differently about a lot of things. We just think differently. We don't fit at all. That's an incredible sign. And the more we don't fit in the world, it's a better sign. It's a strong sign that God is working with us, and that we want nothing to do with this world, but we want Elohim. That's a sign to God that we're saying, "Yes, we're choosing Him. We're choosing His word. We're choosing everything that He gives to us, that we want to yield to it. We want to give in to that." Because it is about giving in. Self doesn't want to give in. We want to get rid of self and give in to God, you know, yield to God.

Now, drop down to **verse 18—And the Lord drove out from before us all the peoples, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the Lord God, for He is our God.** Now, we realize that sin has been driven out from us. You know, when we repent, God, through Passover, the death of Christ, got rid of our sin. We accept Christ as our sacrifice for sin. And now, God can dwell in us. It's an incredible thing. And we accept that. We understand it. You look

at these physical things, they were moved on a physical level. We should be moved on a spiritual level for what God has done for us and what He is offering us. It's an amazing thing.

Drop down to **verse 22—So, Joshua said to the people, You are witness against yourselves that you have chosen the Eternal for yourselves to serve Him. And they said, We are witnesses.**

Well, we're witnesses. It's obvious. The evidence is in us that God has called us, and that God is living and dwelling in us. Because of and by ourselves, we can do nothing. Nothing at all. Nothing spiritual. Absolutely impossible.

The only way we can obey God, the only way that we can be righteous, is because God, in His mercy, allows us through the power of His holy spirit. He leads us, He guides us, and we make that choice. It's a free will choice we make, but God still has to be involved in it; otherwise, that choice is worthless. As others who, in other religions, they think they're doing the right thing. But without God, it's all vanity, it's all a waste of time.

Verse 23—Now therefore, he said, put away foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart (your intent) to the Lord your God of Israel. And the people said to Joshua, The Eternal, our God, we will serve, and His voice, we will obey. Now, this was on a physical level. Well, this is exactly our intent and our motive today, on a spiritual level. "The Lord, our God, we will serve." We will obey God. We will yield to God. We will give in to what God's word is and deny self.

Saying the word "give in," it's about sacrificing self. You know, get rid of it, and yield to God.

"And obey His voice." We will do what is required by God. If God says something, we will do it. And we understand Church government, and therefore, we yield self, and we do it, what is given to us through God, by God, through Christ, through an apostle.

There is a choice to be made by those who live in the Millennium and those who are resurrected to live in the last hundred years. It's the same choice we have to make. The choice is very simple, really. It's Elohim or nothing. It's as black and white as we can get.

If we fight self and continue in the battle, we will be blessed to enter Elohim. For any being created that refuses to repent, resists and fights against God, the outcome is blackness and darkness forever.